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St Antony's International Review

Human Security

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ALEXANDER BETTS AND MATTHEW EAGLETON-PIERCE

The concept of 'human security' represents a challenge to the Cold War assumption that 'security' should be understood in purely state-centric and militaristic terms. Rather, it recognises, firstly, that the ultimate referent object of security should be the individual, whose well-being is not necessarily coterminous with the security of the state. Secondly, it highlights that the sources of threat to individuals go far beyond inter-state conflict to include, for example, internal conflict, human rights abuses, communicable disease, environmental disasters, poverty and malnutrition.¹

Yet, beyond these basic tenets, human security is itself a contested and ambiguous term. In many ways, this reflects its divergent origins. In an academic context, the concept emerged from critical security studies (CSS) and Ken Booth's seminal work in 1991.² The CSS approach is based on the recognition that, far from being the source of security, the state can at times be the greatest threat not only to the citizens of other states, but also to its own citizens. Subsequently, CSS has splintered into a range of constructivist³ and critical approaches⁴ to understanding the relationship between state action and individual welfare. In the policy context of multilateral governance, however, human security has a very different archaeology. It emerged notably in the context of human development in the United Nations Human Development Report of 1994.⁵ Later, the concept evolved in connection with the growing significance of interventionist approaches to human rights and the increased awareness of the 'new threats' created by globalisation that were highlighted by the report of the Commission on Global Governance in 1995.⁶ In neither case did the reports draw significantly upon the concepts elaborated within CSS.

However, in both the academic and policy-level debates, a precise definition of human security remains elusive. The failure to set clear analytical boundaries on the term has led to what might be termed 'human security pessimism.' Given the largely unresolved conceptual issues concerning the scope of the concept and the corresponding methodological dilemmas associated with human security, Roland Paris was not alone in asking whether the term amounted to 'hot air.'⁷ What meaning can the concept have, if 'security' implies that the gamut of threats beyond militarism, embracing development and human rights and if the referent

object is now no longer the state but the individual or even the group? Even the special issue of *Security Dialogue* on human security, which compiled a series of brief reflections on the term, failed to find consensus on its direction and largely confirmed the sense of uncertainty about human security's conceptual viability.⁸

Yet, somewhat paradoxically, much of the human security debate and language have recently re-emerged at the level of global governance, particularly through the work of the Commission on Human Security. As the articles by Sadako Ogata and Edward Newman highlight, the UN reform debate has been conducted on the basis of the human security discourse. The idea of the 'responsibility to protect,' the content of the UN Secretary-General's *In Larger Freedom* and the output of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change all closely relate to the notion of human security developed by the Commission. Similarly, bilateral and regional initiatives increasingly are drawing explicitly upon the concept. The Japanese Government's UN Human Security Trust Fund, discussed by Ogata, is but one case-in-point.

Within the context of these contemporary global debates and challenges, the following articles attempt to move beyond the polarisation of the 'definition debate.' Collectively, the papers advance the human security discourse by exploring whether, and, if so, how, the concepts underpinning human security can play a normative role at the international, national, local and transnational levels. While this argument has precedent, the articles tackle it from multiple and markedly diverse angles, offering a diverse range of highly original theoretical and empirical reflections.

Contesting the Concept and its Relevance

In light of the concept's re-emergence and the academic impasse described above, the theoretical questions raised in this edition in many ways imply a new approach to human security, one that moves beyond seeking objectively to define its scope. Instead, the approach examines 'human security' as a normative-political issue that has the potential to be mobilised to influence states' behaviours towards individuals. In this context, the theoretical pieces raise two particularly salient questions, with varying degrees of explicitness, that relate to the normative and practical utility of human security at the level of global governance.

The first of these broad questions asks to what extent the very indeterminacy of the concept, so often lamented in the academic litera-

ture, underpins its normative power. Rather than being an objective and clearly defined concept, is the political power of human security based on its inherent contestability as a discursive concept? Newman's piece, in particular, engages with this issue. He contrasts the academic debate's failure to achieve consensus on conceptual clarity, on the one hand, with the apparent 'mainstreaming' of the concept at a UN policy level and identifying the power of human security at the normative level, on the other. This, he argues, is the reason why, despite ongoing ambiguity, the concept has underpinned the debate on UN reform.

Peter Hough's article likewise builds on the inherent contestability of the concept as something to 'be embraced' rather than dismissed as an academic failure *per se*. He argues in favour of the 'widening' and 'deepening' of the term not only as a means to contest the anachronism of realist approaches to security, but also as a means to restore security to the level of subjectivity. Drawing on the Copenhagen School, he suggests that the scope of the concept is inevitably broad, because it must reflect the range of subjective responses to and understandings of 'threat.' Revealing this subjectivity through empirical research, he argues, offers a better guide to policy than the arbitrariness of state-centric and militaristic approaches to security.

In light of the renewed focus on human security at the level of multilateral governance, the second broad question asks to what extent the concept can serve as a universal 'rallying call' around which inter-agency collaboration and inter-state cooperation can be nurtured. As Ogata explains, one of the greatest obstacles to ensuring human welfare remains the compartmentalisation of global governance. She highlights, for example, how in response to post-conflict reconstruction there has been historically a discontinuity between humanitarian relief and development. The numerous case studies of issue-areas and regional contexts in which human security has been applied show how the concept has served as a focal point around which an integrated approach to global governance is emerging. Again, it may be precisely the breadth of the concept that underpins its usefulness.

With regards to its potential role in improving the prospects for inter-state cooperation, Richard Ponzio argues that what is distinctly new about human security is its universal appeal. Far from being a concept that exclusively draws on Western political philosophy, as Neil MacFarlane implies, he shows that the strength of the concept has been its application across the boundaries of 'Occidental civilisation.' Yet, as Taylor Owen suggests, if 'human security' has such a role to play as a normative

concept capable of uniting across agency mandates and state boundaries, then there is something of a paradox. He argues that, although the debate on UN reform has implicitly entailed most of the conceptual elements of the debate on human security and the elements of the Commission on Human Security, the Secretary-General notably has stopped short of using the term in the way envisaged by both Newman and Ogata.

Against the backdrop of the questions raised above, MacFarlane's piece places this overall normative debate within its historical context, tracing the archaeology of human security's 'pre-history.' He argues that the concept is not in fact new, but is part of a deeply-rooted debate on the relationship between state and human being that has spanned the classical, medieval, Westphalian and early modern eras. As with the other theoretical pieces in the issue, MacFarlane's article points out that human security should not only be defined in terms of its depth and breadth, but also that the term poses broader questions about the contemporary manifestation of the normative contestation of the obligations between states, citizens and non-citizens.

Broadening the Empirical Debate

Where the theoretically-focused articles explore human security as a disputed normative terrain at the UN level, the articles by David Turton and Julie Taylor identify case studies in which the relationship between state, society and individual is being contested in practice. Significantly, both pieces highlight the role of group identity, whether in the form of ethnicity or gender, as a mediating factor between the state and the individual in determining outcomes for human welfare. This approach offers a counterbalance to the implicit state/individual dichotomy of human security, highlighting the need for collective identity to be integrated more fully into the theoretical debate.⁹

One of the greatest threats to human security since the end of the Cold War has been that attributed to so-called 'ethnic conflict.' Turton's article engages directly with this issue by exploring the relationship between democratisation and ethnic diversity. Drawing on the Ethiopian government's pioneering experiment in ethnic federalism, the paper raises significant questions about the system, its emergence and uniqueness, whether it has been a success, and its long-term sustainability. Significantly, the case study points to how ethnicity, as a socially constructed concept, may be an opportunity

to create political stability and democratic sustainability, rather than inevitably causing a 'problem' or 'threat' to human security.

Arguably, the concept of human security has often reinforced the dichotomy between individual and state so prevalent in conventional and state-centric approaches to security studies. Taylor's piece contributes to redressing this shortcoming by considering the role of the group identity in mobilising resistance to insecurity. The article explores the role that trans-national feminist networks have played in contesting the gendered effects of neo-liberal economic restructuring. The article draws upon a diverse range of case studies from Central America, Brazil and Trinidad and Tobago to argue that such networks in Latin America and the Caribbean commonly draw upon and manipulate the strategic resources of 'global' discourses in order to empower 'local' level struggles.

In conclusion, clashes over the relationship between individuals, often mobilised around group identities, and the state are in many ways the very basis of politics. Seeking to universally define acceptable norms for these relationships is inevitably difficult precisely because such norms are subject to cultural standpoints, group identity and individual interests. Yet, given the range of threats that exist to human welfare in today's world and the implausibility of nihilistic cultural relativism in a globalised world, the human security debate, however contestable, remains one of the most central conceptual and political debates in international affairs. Rather than abandoning the debate due to conceptual ambiguity, the papers in this issue collectively explore the institutional and non-institutional means to adapt the relationship between state and individual in favour of human welfare.

Notes

¹ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (London: Massachusetts Institute for Technology, 1995); Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

² Ken Booth, 'Security and Emancipation,' *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): 313-326; Keith Krause and Michael Williams, ed., *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

³ Ole Waever, Barry Buzan and Pierre Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993); Jutta Welles, *Constructing National*

Interests: The United States and the Cuban Missile Crisis (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

⁴ Richard Wyn Jones, *Security, Strategy and Critical Theory* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1999).

⁵ United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report, New Dimensions of Human Security*, (New York: UNDP 1994).

⁶ The Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

⁷ Roland Paris, 'Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?,' *International Security* 26, no. 2 (2001): 87-102.

⁸ Peter Burgess and Taylor Owen, ed., 'Special Section: What is Human Security?,' *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004): 345-387.

⁹ This is the type of approach argued for by Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests: A Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

SADAKO OGATA

Human Security Discourse

We live in a globalising world. Today, money, goods, information and people move rapidly across borders. Diseases, weapons, pollution, financial crises and terrorist attacks threaten people not only in one country, but also quickly affect those in neighboring countries and far beyond. On the other hand, increasing openness in trade and investment and rapid communication and transportation flows can contribute to a remarkable rate of economic growth and positively affect people's lives. A globalising world is, indeed, an interdependent world in which all states and societies depend increasingly on the acts and omissions of others for their security, even for their survival. The realities of the changing world have led to the broadening of the traditional concept of security based on the state to one that incorporates the security of individual human beings.

Several strands of thought have led to the development of a new security discourse that places the security of people ahead of other security concerns. Mahbub ul Haq¹ shaped human security as a distinctive new development concept and presented it in the 1994 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Development Report. Soon thereafter, the Canadian government expressed its foreign policy focus on human security and led a group of like-minded countries to advance human security as a policy agenda. Meanwhile, Japan turned to human security as a concept that could mobilise social safety nets in response to the Asian financial crisis of 1997. At the 2000 United Nations Millennium Summit, Secretary-General Kofi Annan advocated building a world that embodied the twin ideals of 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom from want.' Together with Japan's Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, the Secretary-General took the initiative to assign an independent Commission on Human Security (hereafter, the Commission) to examine the full range of security threats and to propose measures to define and advance human security.

Together with Professor Amartya Sen, who won the Nobel prize for economics in 1998, I co-chaired the Commission from 2001 to 2003. Mandated to develop the concept of human security as an operational tool for policy formulation and implementation, the Commission studied

S. Ogata, 'Human Security: Theory and Practice', *STAIR* 1, No 2, (2005): 11-23.

and assessed the manifold implications of security challenges. In addition to assigning studies and examining the research findings, it reached out to a wide range of concerned scholars and civil society leaders in different parts of the world to obtain first-hand observations on the state of security. Of particular significance were the public hearings held in South Africa, the Central Asian republics and Thailand. These endeavors reinforced the Commission's perception that, while globalisation opens up new opportunities, it also can produce new fault lines. Political and economic instabilities have led to bitter conflicts within states, and people throughout the world, in developing and developed countries alike, now live under varied conditions of insecurity.

Protection-Empowerment Framework

As a point of departure, the Commission decided to define human security as 'protecting the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment.' This meant 'protecting fundamental freedoms,' 'protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations' and empowering individuals and communities to develop the capabilities for making informed choices and determining their own well-being.¹ The Commission then developed three approaches as operational tools to facilitate the implementation of the concept of human security.

The first approach is the protection of people's security, their basic rights and freedoms. Human security does not seek to replace but rather to compliment and build upon measures established to assure state security. State security tends to concentrate on protecting borders, institutions and people from external aggression or adversarial designs. Human security focuses on ensuring the safety of individuals and communities against a wider range of threats, including deadly infectious diseases, human rights violations, financial crisis, violent conflict, famine or water shortage, among others. A key to advancing human security in normal times requires concerted efforts to develop national and international norms, processes and institutions in ways that address insecurities in comprehensive and preventive ways.²

The second approach is the centrality of empowering individuals and communities in order to overcome a wide range of deprivations through devising and implementing solutions. People's ability to act on their own behalf is a critical factor in achieving human security. Focusing on the ability of the people differentiates human security

from other approaches that centre on humanitarian or development assistance. Supporting people's abilities to act on their own behalf means providing education and information, access to health care and social safety nets to prepare them for economic or political downturns. Equally relevant would be building public spaces that encourage discussions among people and developing local leadership, on the one hand, as well as tolerating opposition on the other. The Commission was concerned that the empowerment of people should move forward in an environment of freedom of the press, freedom of information and freedom of conscience and belief, and be accompanied by policies of inclusion.³

Although protection is exercised through a top-down approach, while empowerment requires a bottom-up approach, the two are mutually reinforcing. The Commission noted that while people protected can exercise many choices, people empowered can make better choices and bring about improvements in the system of protection. Together, the protection-empowerment framework is fundamental to the functioning of any well-governed state. It also serves as a guide to state-building and provides crucial insights into peace-building endeavors. While recognizing the importance of strengthening the protection power of the state, the framework also insists that development assistance policies give due regard to the empowerment of the people.

The third and most formidable challenge lies in finding ways to link the broad issues that comprise human security. To cite a few examples, establishing human security might require the settlement of conflicts, observance of human rights, access to health care and education, provision of clean air and water supply or building public space. People want security, rights and development, but the response very often comes in a piecemeal fashion. In fact, even the understanding of the multiple threats does not emerge in any integrated fashion. Expertise is frequently developed along functional lines and exercised through institutions and bureaucracies that generally are compartmentalised. Functional divisions dominate local, national and global governance.

The Commission proposed to make human security the goal that triggers a strong integrated response.⁴ By mainstreaming human security, the work of global and regional security organisations could take a common stand with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the fight against all causes of poverty. The debate over development assistance might include arms control and nuclear agendas. Educational and health activities would join hands in promoting the well-being of citizens on a local, regional or even global level.

Within the UN, collaboration across issue areas has developed to address realities. The Security Council is charged with issues of peace and security, and the Economic and Social Council's mandate now covers a wide range of economic, social and development matters. However, in the last decade, the Security Council has broadened its understanding of security and addressed issues such as the massive outflow of refugees and the spread of HIV/AIDS. The Economic and Social Council has sent missions to conflict areas in search for solutions and settlements for people's well-being. Meanwhile, the Millennium Declaration has directed world attention to the plight of people in abject conditions or exposed to critical and pervasive threats.⁵

Security Agenda: Prevention and Intervention

While human security is now on the security and development agendas, questions have arisen with regards to conflict prevention and the promotion of human security in situations of violent conflict. The 1990s witnessed a rise in the number and intensity of internal conflicts and state collapses and an increase in the proportion of civilian casualties. However, the international peace and security system in the previous decades had concentrated on maintaining collective security by preventing aggression between states and limiting the right of states to resort to the use of force. When conflicts became rampant within states, and when states seemed to possess neither the will nor the capacity to protect their people, external measures increasingly were identified as a means to ensure human security beyond the boundaries of sovereign states.

Subsequently, two approaches have emerged. One is more preventive in orientation; the other is more interventionist. Memories of the failure to intervene adequately in the 'ethnic cleansing' in the Balkans or the genocide in Rwanda during the 1990s inspired both approaches. The Commission led the search for preventive measures by concentrating on the humanitarian implications of internal conflict. It advocated closer observance of human rights and humanitarian law, particularly with respect to the protection of civilian victims, refugees, women and children. It emphasised strengthening humanitarian action by preparing efficient and effective assistance capacity. It advocated the inclusion of the protection of people as part of the Security Council agenda and peace keeping operations and endorsed enhancing the mandates of regional security organisations. Preventive strategies increasingly became a priority of academic, state and international research. Of the

outputs generated within the UN, the Secretary-General's reports on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict and on the Prevention of Armed Conflict deserve special recognition.⁶ The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict produced a series of in-depth studies, covering tools such as early warning mechanisms, targeted sanctions, fact-finding and diplomatic missions and preventive peace-keeping deployment.⁷

In its report 'The Responsibility to Protect,' the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) broke new ground, advocating 'military intervention' for human protection purposes. As with those concerned with human security, ICISS expressed a commitment to preventive measures but also advocated the readiness to resort to military intervention when other means had been explored but failed. In reinterpreting the debate over intervention for human protection purposes, ICISS emphasised the 'responsibility to protect,' rather than insisting on the 'right to intervene.' In emphasising 'responsibility,' ICISS affirmed that primary responsibility continues to rest primarily with the state concerned. However, when the state proves unable or unwilling to act, the international community has a responsibility to do so.⁸

The UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (hereafter, the Panel), which presented its report to the Secretary-General in 2004, 'endorsed the emerging norm that there is a collective international responsibility to protect.' However, the Panel emphasised that the act was 'exercisable by the Security Council authorizing military intervention as a last resort, in the event of genocide and other large-scale killing, ethnic cleansing or serious violations of international humanitarian law.' To the Panel, the common perception of legitimacy of Security Council decisions is crucial to achieving the effectiveness of the collective security system. Therefore, it proposed guidelines to be followed when authorising the use of force with regard to intervention to prevent the large-scale violation of basic rights.⁹

The broad range of debate over the approaches to life threatening situations sharpened the focus on human security as a security agenda. Generally speaking, those concerned with the protection of people in conflict situations were advocates and practitioners of humanitarian law and aid operations, on the one hand, and peace-keepers and peace observers on the other. For example, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which has experience with victims of ethnic cleansing, armed groups in refugee camps and people forced to flee from home, developed a 'ladder of options' that could cover a range of security situations. The primary level of refugee camps and settlements included civilian or police monitors or humanitarian security

officers. The secondary level would introduce sub-regional peace-keeping arrangements. Failing containment, the final level would involve various options for intervention by regional and international military force.¹⁰ The Secretary-General identified the issue of forced population displacement in Africa as a serious threat and requested that UNHCR cooperate with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) to draw up proposals for the establishment of appropriate international mechanisms. The joint efforts between UNHCR and the DPKO contributed to the Secretary-General's ten-point platform for action for the protection of civilians in armed conflict.¹¹

One of the more notable recent attempts to search for preventive engagement is 'A Human Security Doctrine for Europe,' a report prepared by the Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities and presented to the European Union High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, on September 15, 2004. The report labels the mounting conflicts in various parts of the world as a source of new threats to the security of EU citizens. The study endorses seven principles for operations, including a bottom-up approach to communication, consultation and partnership with the local populations. The report proposes the establishment of a 'Human Security Response Force' composed of 15,000 men and women, of whom at least one-third would be civilian, drawn from military and civilian capabilities made available by member states. The study also foresaw the organization of a 'Human Security Volunteer' comprised of a civil peace corps and humanitarian volunteer service as stipulated in the proposed European Constitution. A clear legal framework would govern decisions both to intervene and to operate on the ground.¹²

In Africa too, positive signs of regional initiatives have emerged. The Constituent Act for the African Union, which entered into effect in May 2001, established a number of fundamental principles designed to influence peace-building and security on the continent. For example, the act includes an agreement on the refusal to accept unconstitutional changes in government, combined with recognition of the need for intervention in cases of serious humanitarian crisis. The establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council was accompanied by the development of a common security and defence policy. The Council's security mission incorporates reference to human security. The AU also envisages the eventual development of an African Stand-by Force for peace-support operations.

Clearly, Africa will still require timely and substantial assistance from the UN and the international community for the foreseeable future. However, the AU's renewed willingness to take on the management of

its own crises in areas such as Darfur should be recognised and fully supported by the international community.¹³ Ultimately, whether or not human security will play a decisive role in the fate of people in conflict situations will depend on the will of political leaders and international organisations as well as the mechanisms installed to facilitate action.

Peace-building Agenda

As in cases coping with conflict, post-conflict recovery and rehabilitation operations require an integrated human security approach that spans across public and personal safety, immediate and longer term assistance and the return and reintegration of refugees and other displaced people. However difficult it may be, the post-conflict situation offers opportunities to build a new political order, functioning social and economic institutions and a shared sentiment of reconciliation and coexistence.

The governance capacity of a post-conflict state tends to be weak at both state and local levels. The international response to post-conflict recovery remains slow and highly compartmentalised. This deficiency calls for immediate action in three areas. The first relates to the establishment of public security, which often requires additional external assistance such as the presence of UN peace-keeping or observer forces, or other regional or bilateral security arrangements. Their assistance extends from disarming and demobilising combatants to training national military and police contingents. The second area deals with meeting immediate humanitarian needs. In societies emerging from internal conflicts, life-saving assistance in the form of food, shelter and water supply must be met urgently. Education and health services also must be restored quickly in order to inculcate a sense of returning to normalcy. The third area for action concerns the launch of rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts. The activities range from providing key economic and social services, rebuilding basic infrastructure, such as roads and transportation networks, and reintegrating displaced people and demobilised combatants. In short, by providing key services at an early post-conflict phase, people could be helped to regain their independence from humanitarian relief and to become more active agents in the rebuilding process. In accelerating reconstruction, a wide range of training and job creation efforts are essential.

The actual post-conflict peace-building process in most situations, however, has not followed a continuous path from humanitarian relief to rehabilitation and reconstruction and, finally, to development. The

complex needs that continue to dominate the transition phase may explain partly the difficulty in realising the early hand-over from relief to development work. Agencies dealing with various functions related to humanitarian relief and development are numerous and have diverse mandates, functions and capacities. Humanitarian and development agencies and financial institutions have sought closer cooperation, but efforts have not overcome the prevailing realities of compartmentalisation. In 1997, UNHCR and the World Bank jointly launched the so-called Brookings Process to address the existing 'gap' between these institutions by involving all partners in the coordination and joint programming of activities in a country recovering from conflict.¹⁴ Other initiatives included setting up special units to deal with post-conflict situations within the UNDP and the World Bank.

Resource mobilisation is an area in which greater collaboration and coherence should be sought. Some organisations attract considerable funding, and some post-conflict countries attract more attention. Donors prefer to maintain their prerogative to fund projects selectively, reflecting their own domestic interests. The Commission recommended setting up a transition fund focusing on human security for each post-conflict situation. The fund was to finance the activities agreed under the integrated human security framework.¹⁵ The Panel's proposal to establish a Peace-Building Commission follows in part from the recognition of the existing institutional gap in the UN system to manage the continuum to post-conflict peace-building.¹⁶

Implementing Human Security

The recent case of reconstruction in Afghanistan¹⁷ merits attention, as it has adopted new approaches to overcome existing obstacles through linking military action, political institution-building, humanitarian assistance and development. To begin with, it is important to recall that the military action against Afghanistan took place in reaction to terrorist attacks on the mainland of the United States. The source of the attacks was the Al Qaeda network, which had its base in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. The U.S. successfully achieved its immediate military objective of defeating the Al Qaeda and Taliban forces and then pursued actions against the remaining militants in the south and southeast of the country. A separate International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), authorised by the Security Council, was deployed to look after the security of Kabul. Two other security-related endeavors that followed were

the establishment of the Afghan national army and police force and the demobilisation and reintegration of combatants.

The UN, through the Bonn process, played a crucial role in preparations for the establishment of an interim Afghan administration. The UN itself did not assume a transitional administrative responsibility, but did assist the Afghan Interim Administration as the only responsible political body. Several states volunteered to take leading roles in specific sectors. The US and France were to train and rebuild the Afghan national army; Germany was to train the police; Italy concentrated on the rule of law; the United Kingdom was in charge of controlling the narcotics trade; and Japan opted to assist in the demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants. This diversified provision of services was novel, though, as yet, the results have been mixed. Overall, the post-conflict peace-building structure was based on the understanding that Afghanistan is an independent state to be led by the Afghans, who continued to require a high degree of external administrative assistance.

Meanwhile, reconstruction in Afghanistan has been carried out on two fronts: state and society. At the state level, this process included the installation of a functioning government, in addition to the establishment of nationwide security. The limited administrative capacity in Kabul required an overhaul in order to run a government that could provide at least basic services for its people. The Supreme Court had to be restored, a central bank established and governing institutions created. Money had to be advanced to pay civil servants, buildings to house ministries and telephones brought in to communicate. At the society level, urgent humanitarian assistance had to be brought in immediately as the people faced serious shortages of food, shelter, medical attention and employment. UN humanitarian agencies made a quick and active response: the World Food Program provided enormous food assistance; UNICEF launched a back-to-school program; and UNHCR engaged in a large-scale repatriation and reintegration operation for refugees and internally displaced persons. In short, emergency top-down protection and bottom-up empowerment activities were launched simultaneously in order to meet the human security needs of more than 20 million Afghans.

One goal shared by international agencies and donor governments in Afghanistan was to ensure a seamless and swift transition from humanitarian to development assistance operations. Humanitarian assistance hardly could cope with the long-term demands of the returning refugees and internally displaced for shelter, water, schools, health clinics and the supply of seeds. Under the circumstances, innovative initiatives international agencies and bilateral donors introduced. To cite one example, a system referred to as a 'program secretariat' was set up whereby

international agencies linked up with their respective counterpart ministries and provided secretariat assistance. This arrangement helped develop the capacity of Afghan ministries while ensuring the delivery of assistance. In another example, a donor funded a comprehensive area development program covering several provinces that linked returnee assistance with shelter, education, health services and income generating activities. Humanitarian and development agencies managed the program jointly. Also, the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), a program linking military and reconstruction efforts, developed out of the need to extend security coverage in still uncertain areas while combining it with limited reconstruction work. The modest military presence and patrolling gave some assurance of security to local residents, but the direct military involvement in what is traditionally civilian reconstruction work has come under criticism by NGOs.

Political institution-building through holding the traditional emergency Loya Jirga and holding unprecedented direct presidential elections provided a strong basis for nation-building. The transition from emergency humanitarian assistance to longer-term development operations was promoted particularly by the strong determination of the Afghan government, which set up a series of national development programs that it expected all participating donors and international organizations to follow. Reconstruction in Afghanistan started with infrastructure rehabilitation to meet immediate socio-economic needs. Large-scale infrastructure reconstruction of roads, water and electricity services is yet to come. Afghanistan is now at the stage of facing infrastructure building and the challenge of pursuing economic development.

Development and Human Security

It is important to recall that, from its inception, the focus of human security was associated closely with development. Mahbub ul Huq's intention was to broaden development thinking from the predominant concern of economic growth based on gross domestic product and commodity production to more accurately reflect the quality of human life. With the growing discourse on human security and the Millennium Declaration establishing internationally agreed development goals, international efforts were mobilised to alleviate poverty and misery. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is recognised widely as a public health crisis with a devastating impact on social and economic stability. Illiteracy and innumeracy

are themselves considered as insecurities, and girls' education was cited as fundamental for health. People's livelihoods are recognised as being compromised greatly when they are uncertain about surviving the next day.

In the case of Japan, which initiated the human security approach in response to the 1997 Asian financial crisis, the incorporation of this concept into development assistance was a matter of primary importance. In addition to assisting the work of the Commission, Japan established the UN Human Security Trust Fund to fund projects related to promoting human security and incorporated the concept in its Official Development Assistance Charter, which was revised in 2003. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which is the implementing agency of Japan's official development assistance, has adopted the human security framework and oriented its operations more towards benefiting people.

Two major changes have occurred in JICA policy.¹⁸ Firstly, it has decentralised its operations to the field, where it has transferred more human and financial resources. In response, it expects more project proposals from the field that better reflect situational needs. Secondly, JICA has focused on the people not only as recipients of assistance but also as active agents capable of themselves contributing to development and change. The overall focus is on the 'bottom-up empowerment' approach, although JICA has not forsaken its cooperation with governments, both central and local, to strengthen their 'top-down protection' capability. Not every project that JICA currently implements is necessarily new or different from those it has carried out in the past. What is notable, however, is the systematic review of projects in light of the human security framework.

One difficulty that JICA has faced while implementing the human security approach is related to linkages across issue areas. As was discussed already regarding the challenge of linking the broad issues that comprise human security—whether in terms of military action, human rights or reconstruction, linking the diverse areas of governance into one overall program has not been easy. Experts and institutions are compartmentalised along functional lines. The construction of schools, clinics and water infrastructure do not necessarily target the same community. However, given that human needs are multi-dimensional, people expect to benefit from all social services in an integrated manner. When addressing such comprehensive needs, then, the key is to focus more on integrated community development, encouraging the active participation of community members.

Human lives are, by their nature, interlinked, both with other members of the community and across the issue areas of governance. In today's

increasingly interdependent world, human security provides the conceptual framework for identifying the links across areas of assistance, based on people's needs. Such an integrated and comprehensive approach to assistance may ultimately address the issues of basic security and stability, not only among states, but also within states.

Conclusion

The concept of human security has come a long way since it was first introduced a decade ago. It has now become an established concept that has significant influence on the international and domestic political and security agendas. It has moved the issue of human well-being closer to the centre of many states' concerns. In serious crises, human security has led to debate over the role of intervention and the state's or international community's responsibility to protect, whether militarily, politically or economically. It also has provided clearer direction for organising and coordinating of the post-conflict peace-building process. However, perhaps its greatest contribution lies in bringing to fore the role of individuals and communities in moulding both domestic and global developments.

Human security has not, however, created a binding constraint on inter-state relations. Rather, the human security framework promotes active community participation in shaping views and moulding societies beyond the realm of sovereign control, but it has yet to permeate the discourse of state-centric international law or collective security. The challenge of the human security agenda, therefore, rests on the degree to which it can play an integrative role in cutting across the functional and institutional lines of domestic and global governance to bring security to people and communities. Only then will the concept of human security fulfill its potential to meet the diverse needs that constitute its broad agenda. If it can play this role, it may well develop into a 'new organising principle of international relations,' at both the level of academia and practice.¹⁹

Notes

¹ United Nations, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People*, New York, 2003, 4.

² *Ibid.*, 11.

³ *Ibid.*, 11f.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 130.

⁵ United Nations, General Assembly, *Road Map towards the Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration*, Report of the Secretary-General, A/56/236, New York, 2001.

⁶ United Nations, Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, S/2001/331, New York, 2001.; United Nations, Security Council, *Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*, S/2002/1300, New York, 2002.; United Nations, General Assembly, *Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization, Prevention of Armed Conflict*, A/55/985-S/2001/574, New York, 2001.

⁷ Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, *Preventing Deadly Conflict Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1997).

⁸ International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*, (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, December 2001), 29-39.

⁹ United Nations, Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, New York, December 2004, 66f.

¹⁰ Sadako Ogata, *The Turbulent Decade: Confronting the Refugee Crisis of the 1990s* (New York: Norton, 2005), 386.

¹¹ *Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict*.

¹² The Study Group on Europe's Security Capabilities, *A Human Security Doctrine for Europe*, *The Barcelona Report*, Barcelona, 15 September 2004.

¹³ African Union, Assembly of the Union, Second Extraordinary Session, *Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defense and Security Policy*, Sirte, February 2004.

¹⁴ *Human Security Now*, 58.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹⁶ *A More Secure World*, 83f.

¹⁷ For analysis of the peace-building process in Afghanistan, see Ogata, *The Turbulent Decade*, 304-316.

¹⁸ Japan International Cooperation Agency, *JICA Annual Report 2004: Implementation of JICA Reforms*, Tokyo, 2004, 12-30.

¹⁹ Gerd Oberleitner, 'Human Security: A Challenge to International Law,' *Global Governance* 11, no. 2 (April-June 2005): 197f.

Human Security: Mainstreamed Despite the Conceptual Ambiguity?

EDWARD NEWMAN

The traditional state-centric security paradigm privileges the defence of sovereign territorial integrity over armed attack by foreign actors. This is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition of human welfare. The citizens of states that are 'secure' according to the traditional concept of security can be perilously insecure in terms of their daily existence. Human security thus reorients security thinking and policy around the individual as the referent object. This is normatively attractive but analytically weak. Indeed, after a promising beginning, the academic treatment of human security has almost come to a dead end, floundering upon imprecision and conceptual ambiguities.

Nevertheless, in the world of international norms, the concept of human security is making headway. As a general policy reference the central messages of human security—although not necessarily the terminology—have achieved greater acceptance. This article seeks to demonstrate this greater acceptance by looking at the United Nations reform debate—including an analysis of the High-level Panel report of late 2004 and the Secretary-General's report *In Larger Freedom* of 2005, as well as the draft of the outcomes for the September 2005 heads of state meeting. Although the UN reform debate is hardly a reflection of the world of realpolitik, this does suggest that an increasing number of states and political leaders are embracing the main arguments of human security and the concept has become mainstreamed in an important foreign policy discussion, at least in a normative sense. There is, therefore, still hope for the concept.

Human Security

'Security' is a contested concept and also of the greatest importance to everyone. For these reasons, it attracts a large amount of attention within the social sciences. Getting to the fundamentals, it seems that everything can be questioned: Who or what are the objects or referents of security? What are the instruments of security? What are the costs of security? The answers to these questions have been changing since the

E. Newman, 'Human Security: Mainstreamed Despite the Conceptual Ambiguity', *STAIR* 1, No 2 (2005): 24-36.

end of the Cold War, raising a distinction between 'traditional' and 'new' security thinking. At the very least, most would agree that the concept of security is broadening considerably and continuously, to incorporate military, political, economic, societal and environmental dimensions—as well as the links between them. Within this security debate, 'Human Security' has clearly made its mark and provides answers to many of these questions—although the notion of human security is itself also contested. Human security is an approach to security whereby security must have the individual human being as its referent object.

Traditionally, international security has been defined as the military defence of sovereign territory—defending territory against, and deterring, 'external' military threats. Yet for many people in the world—perhaps even most—much greater threats to security come from internal conflicts, disease, hunger, environmental contamination, street crime or even domestic violence. And for others, a greater threat may come from their own country itself, rather than from an 'external' adversary. Human security seeks to challenge attitudes and institutions that privilege so-called 'high politics' above disease, hunger or illiteracy. Human security is not necessarily in conflict with state sovereignty or 'national' security. The state, as an aggregation of capacity and resources, remains the central provider of security in ideal circumstances. It does suggest, however, that international security traditionally defined—i.e., territorial integrity—does not necessarily correlate with human security, and that an over-emphasis upon state security can be detrimental to human welfare. Traditional conceptions of state security are a necessary but insufficient condition of human welfare. The citizens of states that are 'secure' according to the traditional concept of security can be perilously insecure to a degree that demands a reappraisal of the concept. Human security is a reorientation to redress this asymmetry of attention.¹

In its broadest incarnation, human security is 'freedom from want' and 'freedom from fear,' i.e., positive and negative freedoms and rights.² This idea has gained currency in the post-Cold War world as political and intellectual space has opened. The end of the Cold War gave a boost to those in academia and in progressive foreign policy circles who had been steadily challenging and problematising the state-centric, power-based model of international politics. Secondly, globalisation is fundamental to this changing context, as it has broadened the level of analysis in international relations and brought social and economic insecurities to the fore. Thirdly, normative changes have underpinned, and resulted from, these developments and taken on a momentum of their own, which conditions expectations and standards

of governance within and between communities and has transformed the nature of political community. However, it would be quite wrong to suggest that human security is 'new.' It is not. In fact, it is in some ways a relabeling of older ideas and arguments, including 'comprehensive security' and 'societal security.' Human security has its roots in the tradition of political liberalism—the idea that the point of politics should be to enhance the freedom and security of individuals.

Human security reflects the concern that contemporary security, if it is to be relevant to changing conditions and needs, must focus on the individual or people collectively. This focus does not exclude the importance of traditional ideas of security but does suggest that it may be more effective and legitimate to reorient the provision of security around people. In a sense, this reorientation makes human security normative. Human security also rests upon empirical reasoning regarding the foundations of stability within and between states. There is greater understanding that the deprivation of human security—such as socio-economic deprivation and exclusion, egregious abuses of human rights and widespread epidemiological threats such as AIDS—has a direct impact upon peace and stability within and between states. As such, it is in the general interest to address human security needs—and build capacity for others to address theirs—in line with the interconnected nature of peace and security. In addition, there can be a methodological argument behind human security: it sees the individual as the dependent variable and focuses on this. *Anything* that presents a critical threat to life and livelihood is a security threat, whatever the source. In fact, the overarching objective of promoting human security is both morally imperative and practically sensible. In this interdependent era, severe inequality, deprivation and insecurity *anywhere* can ultimately have a negative impact *everywhere*.

There are basically two different strands of human security. The first is the broad, development-based human needs approach, often associated with the un Development Program (UNDP), which focuses on economic, food, health, personal, environmental, community, cultural and political security. UN's *Human Development Report 1994* popularised the concept that human welfare is the best indicator of security: 'It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life—whether in homes, in jobs or in communities.'³ The UN model rests upon a number of propositions, such as that human security is people-centred and a universal concern. Although the intensity of some threats varies—such as unemployment, drugs, crime, pollution and human rights violations—they are a threat to all. Components of human security are interdependent. Severe threats to human security

are not confined to single communities, and human security is easier to ensure through early prevention. The emphasis of the human needs model is upon safety and freedom, especially in critical situations, rather than the broader concept of human *development*, which is concerned with widening people's choices.

The second approach is narrower and focuses more on conflict. It focuses on trends in modern conflict, which reflect a high level of civil war and state collapse, which result in a proportionately high rate of victimisation and displacement of civilians, especially women and children. According to human security reasoning, the inescapable conclusion is that action must be taken to alleviate gross human suffering, even if this sometimes encroaches upon sovereign prerogatives. Thus, 'humanitarian intervention' and other forms of coercion are inevitably part of the human security debate.

Finally, human security can be an umbrella concept for approaching a range of 'non-traditional' security issues, such as AIDS, transnational organized crime, terrorism, inhumane weapons such as anti-personnel landmines, and trafficking in human beings.

Human Security Debates

Human security has stimulated new—mainly normative—lines of inquiry in the security discourse. The human security debate raises interesting questions for the structure-agency binary. Human security has at its core the individual as object. Some advocates of human security also identify the individual as the key vehicle for attaining security through empowerment.⁴ Yet, much human insecurity surely results from structural factors and the distribution of power that are essentially beyond the reach of individuals. Exploring the relationship between human agency and structure in solutions to human security challenges is a pressing next step in the human security discourse.

In addition, human security raises questions regarding the relationship between the individual and the state, and regarding state sovereignty. Traditionally, state sovereignty and sovereign legitimacy rest upon a government's control of territory, state independence and recognition by other states. The role of citizens is to support this system. The human security approach reverses this equation: the state, and state sovereignty, must serve and support the people from whom it draws its legitimacy.

Related to this, human security holds normative implications for the evolution of state sovereignty at the international level. The concept of 'conditional sovereignty' has taken on a renewed importance through human security: the international legitimacy of state sovereignty rests not only on control of territory but also upon fulfilling certain standards of human rights and welfare for its citizens. As a corollary, the sovereignty of states that are unwilling or unable to fulfill certain basic standards may be jeopardised. The use of military force for humanitarian protection purposes—'humanitarian intervention'—is the starkest example of this concept.

This leads to a related normative line of inquiry: to what extent is human security inherently 'revisionist'? Does it fundamentally question existing structures and institutions of power, gender and distribution in relation to economic and political organisation? Some approaches to human security are essentially status quo oriented, whilst others represent a fundamental challenge to institutions and values of political and economic organisation at all levels. These are not new debates. In terms of international economics and development, old questions are revisited. What adjustments in the structure of the international economic system—governing trade, investment and terms of trade for commodities—may be necessary to redress the structural inequalities of the international economic system and provide a genuinely 'level playing field'? How can we find a more balanced approach to development which factors in environmental and social considerations into market mechanisms, and considers quality of life in an era of mass production and economic costs and gains? In terms of conflict and intervention, how can we balance the principle of sovereignty with the right of people to basic human rights in times of crisis or war?

In many ways, human security *is* revisionist. Taken to its conclusion, human insecurity may be understood 'not as some inevitable occurrence but as a direct result of existing structures of power that determine who enjoys the entitlement to security and who does not.'⁵ Any agenda of recommendations based upon an inquiry into human security would be construed as political, in so far as the subject engages and questions structures and institutions of power, authority and distribution.

Any investigation into human security, if it is to be sincere, will thus unavoidably engage in highly controversial debates regarding political and economic organisation and state sovereignty. The assertive/interventionist model of human security, with its association with humanitarian intervention, is most obviously in tension with the norm of state sovereignty and communitarian notions of nation-building and human rights. For example, Lloyd Axworthy, a champion of hu-

man security, argued (while foreign minister of Canada) that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's intervention in Yugoslavia in 1999 was the 'human security dynamic at work.'⁶ This notion did not find support outside North America or Western Europe; indeed, it is the intrusive connotations of human security that have made it politically sensitive in regions of the world in which states aggressively guard their hard-won state sovereignty. In turn, there is an argument that we cannot consider human security meaningfully without discussing gender inequality first, and that 'women's empowerment is a precondition for human security.'⁷ Human Security is also, in many ways, 'solidarist' in a cosmopolitan sense—that is, arguing that the human rights and needs of people in other countries deserve attention and support.

Of course, there have been criticisms of the concept of human security. Some have questioned if human security issues are more appropriately considered as 'domestic' issues of welfare and governance. In other words, why are human security issues international issues? There also have been criticisms that human security is hopelessly broad and inclusive and, therefore, can have no analytic usefulness. This last point arises when we attempt to define human security. There must be a rationale for bringing a diverse range of issues together within a single, unifying theme of 'Human Security.' The definition used by the UN University is:

Human security is concerned with the protection of people from critical and life-threatening dangers, regardless of whether the threats are rooted in anthropogenic activities or natural events, whether they lie within or outside states, and whether they are direct or structural. It is 'human-centred' in that its principal focus is on people both as individuals and as communal groups. It is 'security oriented' in that the focus is on freedom from fear, danger and threat.⁸

Mainstreaming Human Security?

The academic treatment of human security has largely failed—thus far, at least—to resolve its fundamental conceptual questions, especially concerning the scope of human security—what is included and excluded—and the methodological framework through which we might approach and measure it. However, there is evidence that in the 'real world' of international politics, the principal issues of human security are making normative headway, although not necessarily with the terminology of 'Human Security' with capital letters. This headway is partly a result of the growing evidence of a link between human insecurity and conflict/

instability. Terrorism is a key example. The experience of Afghanistan, before September 11, 2001, showed how corrupt, unstable, ineffective and repressive governance caused misery for millions. Human rights, development and education—amongst other things—all ranked among the worst in the world. At the same time, such a state of affairs also can be a breeding ground and haven for violent grievance and terrorism, the effects of which, as we witnessed, have a far wider impact upon international peace and security. The war on terror has reinforced the need to go beyond the traditional security framework; terrorism must be dealt with at the nexus between development and security. The traditional security analysis did not serve us well in anticipating 9/11, nor does it serve us well in the response.

The lessons of this upsurge in international terrorism support many of the key messages of the human security approach. Governance, for example, can be fundamentally important, not just at home, but across borders. A number of states have placed a great deal of emphasis in their own foreign policy upon the promotion of democracy as a means of spreading peace within societies and on a regional basis. Whilst the 'democratic peace thesis' has attained empirical validity in terms of peaceful relations between states, the 'liberal peace' is now promoted conceptually, and in policy circles, as a panacea for peace and development within states.

The UN reform process in 2004 and 2005 brought a great deal of foreign policy thinking together, and much of this appears to have internalised key human security messages. In November 2003, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan observed that 'the past year has shaken the foundations of collective security and undermined confidence in the possibility of collective responses to our common problems and challenges. It has also brought to the fore deep divergences of opinion on the range and nature of the challenges we face, and are likely to face in the future.'⁹ He announced a High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (HLP) made up of various luminaries, including political leaders.¹⁰ The Panel's report provides something of an endorsement of the human security approach.¹¹ The Secretary-General's foreword observes the need for a 'broad framework' and a 'comprehensive system' of collective security that understands the interconnected nature of today's threats to security.¹² In turn, Anand Panyarachun, HLP chair, asserted that 'The central challenge for the twenty-first century is to fashion a new and broader understanding...of what collective security means—and of all the responsibilities, commitments, strategies and institutions that come with it if a collective security system is to be effective, efficient and equitable.'¹³ This new security consensus goes beyond the conventional model of interna-

tional security as defence of the state and territorial integrity. Indeed, the HLP report provides a perfect human security definition of a security threat: 'any event or process that leads to large-scale death or lessening of life chances and undermines states as the basic unit of the international system.'¹⁴ The report focuses upon six clusters of security threats: economic and social threats, including poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation; inter-state conflict; internal conflict, including civil war, genocide and other large-scale atrocities; nuclear, radiological, chemical and biological weapons; terrorism; and transnational organised crime. Clearly, the first and third of these clusters emphasises areas of concern that are central to the human security argument.

A further aspect of the HLP report that supports the human security movement is its emphasis upon the inter-connections amongst security challenges, whether traditional or human: 'Every threat to international security today enlarges the risk of other threats.'¹⁵ Thus, human deprivation, malnutrition and disease can have negative repercussions for more conventional security issues. The report argues that international terrorist groups prey on weak states for sanctuary, and that poverty, infectious disease, environmental degradation and war feed on one another.¹⁶ In fact, poverty and inequality, especially in divided societies, can be associated with outbreaks of civil war. The idea of interconnections amongst security challenges comes through particularly well in the following passage:

Civil war, disease and poverty increase the likelihood of State collapse and facilitate the spread of organised crime, thus also increasing the risk of terrorism and proliferation due to weak States and weak collective capacity to exercise the rule of law. Preventing mass-casualty terrorism requires a deep engagement to strengthen collective security systems, ameliorate poverty, combat extremism, end the grievances that flow from war, tackle the flow of infectious disease and fight organised crime.¹⁷

The sections of the HLP report relating to state sovereignty are also in line with the human security ethos: 'It clearly carries with it the obligation of a State to protect the welfare of its own people and meet its obligations to the wider international community.'¹⁸ As a corollary, the report also acknowledges that this 'responsibility to protect' conditions modern ideas of sovereignty; in situations where a state is unable or unwilling to fulfill basic standards of human rights, that responsibility may shift to the international community.¹⁹

A further key report of the UN is the Secretary-General's reform report *In Larger Freedom*, which also strongly endorses the 'responsibility to protect' concept. The report states that 'the time has come for Govern-

ments to be held to account, both to their citizens and to each other, for respect of the dignity of the individual, to which they too often pay only lip service.²⁰ It continues, 'If national authorities are unable or unwilling to protect their citizens, then the responsibility shifts to the international community to use diplomatic, humanitarian and other methods to help protect the human rights and well-being of civilian populations. When such methods appear insufficient, the Security Council may out of necessity decide to take action under the Charter of the United Nations, including enforcement action, if so required.'²¹

A key thrust of this report is that development, security and human rights are all imperative and mutually dependent:

Not only are development, security and human rights all imperative; they also reinforce each other. This relationship has only been strengthened in our era of rapid technological advances, increasing economic interdependence, globalisation and dramatic geopolitical change. While poverty and denial of human rights may not be said to 'cause' civil war, terrorism or organised crime, they all greatly increase the risk of instability and violence. Similarly, war and atrocities are far from the only reasons that countries are trapped in poverty, but they undoubtedly set back development. Again, catastrophic terrorism on one side of the globe, for example an attack against a major financial centre in a rich country, could affect the development prospects of millions on the other by causing a major economic downturn and plunging millions into poverty. And countries which are well governed and respect the human rights of their citizens are better placed to avoid the horrors of conflict and to overcome obstacles to development.²²

This is surely human security in everything but name: 'We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights.'²³ The Secretary-General's report promotes the Millennium Development Goals as the fundamental path to peace and human security—the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, the achievement of universal primary education, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, the reduction of child mortality, the improvement of maternal health, the continuation of the fight against preventable disease, the ensuring of environmental sustainability and the creation of a global partnership for development.

The Secretary-General's report also endorses the conceptual ethos of the HLP report: 'Depending on wealth, geography and power, we perceive different threats as the most pressing. But the truth is we cannot afford to choose. Collective security today depends on accepting that the threats which each region of the world perceives as most urgent are

in fact equally so for all.²⁴ Thus, threats are interconnected: the new security consensus depends upon the belief that whatever threatens one threatens all. If this is accepted, the international community must tackle the whole range of threats, whether HIV/AIDS, terrorism or poverty. The emphasis that *In Larger Freedom* places upon international criminal accountability, human rights and democracy are similarly an endorsement of tenets of key human security.

Of course, the reports of the HLP and the Secretary-General are not a demonstration of—or even a commitment to—action on the part of the governments of the world. Nevertheless, they do reflect an emerging normative consensus, and are not completely divorced from the ‘real world’ of policy. After all, the Secretary-General’s report was drafted, with specific policy recommendations, with governments in mind—and often in consultation with UN member states. Only governments can accept or reject the proposals, not international civil servants. We saw an indication of the response of UN member states in the form of the draft statements of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly, which was to take place in September 2005. This, of course, will be a statement of the member states, and not of the secretariat staff. The July 2005 draft of this statement was, in some ways, even more explicit than the earlier two reports in its endorsement of ‘human security as a means to empower people.’²⁴ It also endorsed the theoretical thrust of those earlier reports in stating that ‘development, security and human rights form the indispensable foundations for collective security and well-being’ and that development, security and human rights are mutually dependent and reinforcing.²⁵ In line with this, the report demands an end to impunity and recommends steps for promoting international accountability.

Whilst some observers might claim that such diplomatic niceties do not have a great deal of meaning in reality, the draft report, without a doubt, goes far beyond the usual UN banalities in its promotion of human security ideas. The draft report’s emphasis upon promoting good governance and, explicitly, democracy, is progressive. It was not so long ago that the UN Secretary-General observed that a UN role in the process of democracy and democratisation was a ‘risky business,’ given the sensitivities that exist in international politics towards anything that implies intervention or an encroachment upon state sovereignty.²⁶

Above all, the draft report’s explicit endorsement of the ‘responsibility to protect’ is a great leap forward for the UN member states. Even if this portion of the draft report does not survive the September 2005 plenary in tact, the fact that it appeared in a revised draft report, after much deliberation amongst member states, is meaningful. The report observes a ‘shared responsibility to take collective action, through the

Security Council and, as appropriate, in cooperation with relevant regional arrangements, under Chapter VII of the Charter, should peaceful means prove insufficient and national authorities be unwilling or unable to protect their populations.²⁷

Conclusions

Through a human security lens, anything that presents a critical threat to life and livelihood is a security threat, whatever the source. A rigorous analytical application of human security, even broadly defined, is not impossible. If the individual is the dependent variable, then it is possible to identify and codify every physical security threat. But, this would be of little use as it would generate an unmanageable array of variables. At the same time, arbitrarily drawing lines to include and exclude certain types of threats is problematic. The academic treatment of human security has floundered upon this fundamental conceptual point.

However, the human security movement is contributing to the gradual emergence of international norms. Whilst these norms are not always seen within the terminology of human security, they nevertheless embrace some of the key tenets of the concept. Emerging norms are not settled norms and do not reflect general practice. The words in these UN reports do not reflect the world as it necessarily is, but as some people believe that it should be. Nevertheless, norms *do* emerge and can become settled. The language of international politics plays its small part in contributing to the norms. The tenets of human security are gathering momentum and acceptance as the evidence gathers that security challenges are interconnected, and that traditional notions of security are, in fact, entwined with the human dimension. No less importantly, an evolving international ethical momentum is propelling solidarist human security notions onto the agenda of international politics.

Notes

¹ See, for example, United Nations, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People*, New York, 2003.; special section on human security in *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (2004); Kanti Bajpai, 'Human Security: Concept and Measurement,' Kroc Institute Occasional Paper no. 19 (August 2000); Astri Suhrke, 'Human Security and the Interests of States,' *Security Dialogue* 30, no. 3 (1999); Edward Newman, 'Human Security and Constructivism,' *International Studies Perspectives* 2, no. 3 (2001); Ramesh Thakur, 'Threats Without Enemies, Security Without Borders: Environmental Security in East Asia,' *Journal of East Asian Studies*

1, no. 2 (2001); Ramesh Thakur, 'From National to Human Security,' in *Asia-Pacific Security: The Economics-Politics Nexus*, eds. Stuart Harris and Andrew Mack (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1997); William Tow, Ramesh Thakur and In-Taek Hyun, eds., *Asia's Emerging Regional Order: Reconciling Traditional and Human Security* (Tokyo: UNU Press, 2000); and S. Neil MacFarlane and Yuen Foong-Khong, *A Critical History of the United Nations and Human Security* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press for the UN Intellectual History Project, forthcoming).

² See, for example, *Human Security Now*.

³ United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 23.

⁴ See, for example, *Human Security Now*.

⁵ Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin, 'Introduction,' in *Globalisation, Human Security, and the African Experience*, eds. Caroline Thomas and Peter Wilkin (London: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 3.

⁶ Lloyd Axworthy, 'NATO's New Security Vocation,' *nato Review* (Winter 1999).

⁷ Khadija Haq, 'Human Security for Women,' in *Worlds Apart. Human Security and Global Governance*, ed. Majid Tehranian (New York: I.B Tauris, 1999), 95.

⁸ This is a working definition (and not an official UNU position) developed by the author and Ramesh Thakur, the UNU Senior Vice Rector.

⁹ UN Press Release, 'Secretary-General Names High-level Panel to Study Global Security and Reform of the International System,' New York, November 4, 2003, <http://www.un-ngls.org/reform&UN.htm>.

¹⁰ The members were Anand Panyarachun (chair), Robert Badinter, João Clemente Baena Soares, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Mary Chinery-Hesse, Gareth Evans, David Hannay, Enrique Iglesias, Amre Moussa, Satish Nambiar, Sadako Ogata, Yevgeny Primakov, Qian Qichen, Nafis Sadik, Salim Ahmed Salim, and Brent Scowcroft.

¹¹ United Nations, Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, New York, December 2004.

¹² *A More Secure World*, vii.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁹ This refers to the landmark report of The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, December 2001).

²⁰ United Nations, Secretary-General, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, New York, 21 March 2005, para. 132.

²¹ *Ibid.*, para. 135

²² *Ibid.*, para. 16.

²³ *Ibid.*, para. 17.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 79.

²⁵ United Nations, The President of the General Assembly, High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly September 2005 (July 2005 draft), para. 115.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, paras. 8, 11.

²⁷ Boutros-Boutros Ghali, *Unvanquished. A u.s.-un Saga* (New York: Random House, 1999), 320, 334.

²⁸ *High-level Plenary Draft*, para. 113.

A Response to Edward Newman: Conspicuously Absent? Why the Secretary-General Used Human Security in All But Name

TAYLOR OWEN

While final judgement on the inclusion of human security in the latest succession of United Nations reform reports will have to wait until the September 2005 UN reform negotiations and beyond, there is no doubt, as Newman points out, that the core principles of human security are reaching a very high level of international acceptance. However, Newman's otherwise concise and persuasive work stops short of reconciling the normative boost given to the 'themes' of human security with the conceptual slight of the Secretary-General's failure to explicitly define the concept. The possible reasons behind this avoidance should raise serious questions for proponents of this still marginalised concept.

Like Newman, I am encouraged that the underlying themes of human security are so prominent in the High-level Panel Report, the Secretary-General's report and the evolving draft outcomes for the September 2005 High-level Plenary meeting of the General Assembly. The broadened principles of insecurity have found a receptive audience in all three. That being said, that the concept as a whole was not endorsed by the Secretary-General is unfortunate and, I believe, due to a lack of conceptual clarity still remaining within the human security discourse.¹ This is a failure by proponents to articulate clearly what human security is and what it is not, and how it can be politically and practically operationalised by both national governments and the international community.

This did not need to be the case. Indeed, the intellectual groundwork for these three reports, the 2001 report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS),² was unabashed in its use of the concept. This report should have provided the catalyst for a broader international recognition and strategic use of human security. Instead, the three UN reports that Newman reviewed use a hodgepodge of human security themes, rather than the concept in its entirety.³ I believe that this is due to two interrelated phenomena: a paradox of human security and a problem of packaging the diverse concept. Briefly highlighting both might

T. Owen, 'Conspicuously Absent? Why the Secretary-General used Human Security in all but Name', *STAIR* 1, No 2 (2005): 37-42.

get us closer to understanding many of the perceived challenges of human security that Newman ably points out.

The Paradox

At the heart of the debate amongst proponents of human security lies a paradox—that the closer one gets to the original, and literal, conceptualisation of human security, the more difficult actualising it becomes.⁴ As Newman summarises, if we make the individual person the referent object of security, then we open up the security mandate to an infinite array of *potential* threats. Making anything that could potentially harm an individual the focus of the security infrastructure would be as unproductive as it would be impractical. While this ‘broad’ or United Nations Development Program conceptualisation is idealistically attractive, it is difficult to know exactly what a policy maker should do with it.⁵

In response, a school of human security thinking has proposed limiting the concept to violent threats to the individual.⁶ While the pragmatic proponents of this ‘narrow’ conceptualisation have the advantage of a much more focused mandate, which only deals with issues such as landmines, criminal violence and child soldiers, they are caught in a contradiction: they make the shift to the individual in theory, but ignore it in practice by subjectively limiting what does and does not count as a viable threat. Indeed, it is communicable disease, which kills 18 million people per year, not violence, which kills several hundred thousand, that is the real threat to individuals.⁷

The question arising from this paradox is clearly central to Newman’s critique of the mainstreaming of human security: how can human security remain true to its original mandate, while also being practically feasible to international policy makers? Unless this paradox is reconciled, human security will remain, understandably, neglected by future UN reports.

Conceptual Ambiguity

The second problem regarding the human security discourse is that of packaging what is, by definition, a very broad and varied subject. As much of the literature has fastidiously focused on defining the concept, there are easily more than 20 definitions in use.⁸ As a consequence, it is understandable that the Secretary-General would be hesitant about using any one iteration. Perhaps, instead of rewording, proponents need to

take a step back and look at the overall structure of how the concept is used. Let me briefly suggest two possible schematics for organising the broad range of work being done under the human security label.

First, I would suggest that there are three principle components of human security between which proponents should always distinguish: the threat, the cause of the threat and the mechanisms mitigating against the threat. When the three are conflated, the concept becomes unmanageable, and potential allies, understandably, are deterred.

Threat identification is a primary purpose of the concept. We can debate how this should be done, and I will summarise a method below, but regardless, this is a necessary attribute of human security. Indeed, it is the very one that separates human from state-based security. Next, the necessarily localised nature human security provides an ideal platform from which to analyze the root causes of vulnerability. Finally, once threats are identified, and the causes explored, mitigating mechanisms must be attributed and implemented. The purpose of this compartmentalisation is to distinguish between the separate, yet equally important, components of what is a necessarily broad concept and, I would argue, series of processes.

The second packaging problem faced by proponents is how to define what is and is not a human security threat. While this question only deals with one of the aforementioned three segments of human security analysis, it goes to the heart of what human security is and is not. Although I believe that human security, like traditional security, should be highly reflexive regarding the threats it includes at any one time and in any one place, human security inevitably will be defined by the issues to which it gets attributed. Of course, the paradox of human security poses a significant problem—one that, arguably, is responsible for many of the ambiguities that Newman points out surrounding the operability of human security. How do we keep the concept broad and true to its mandate of including any possible harm, while also limiting threat inclusion to facilitate policy implementation?

One possible answer to this important question is to think of human security as a threshold, rather than as either a set of categories or a static list of threats. Generally, past conceptualisations have included some or all of the seven UNDP categories (health, economic, personal, political, food, environmental and community) in their definitions. However, as the human security paradox suggests, there is an inverse relationship between the number of UNDP categories that a definition incorporates and its operability. This can be overcome, however, if we cease to think of these categories as heterogeneous—i.e., that the human security mandate must include all potential threats in each category. Instead, if we envis-

age a threshold of severity past which any threat in any category, in any place, may be classified as a human security threat, then we can keep the concept open to any threat source, but also limit it to the very worst harms affecting a particular region.⁹

The Secretary-General's Report Revisited

Taken together, the three categories of human security analysis and the threshold conceptualisation help to address at least four of the ambiguities that Newman highlights and that the Secretary-General implicitly recognizes.

1. As Newman rightfully states, 'Traditional conceptions of state security are a necessary but insufficient condition of human welfare.' Expounding on the threshold conceptualisation, I would add that human security is a necessary but insufficient condition for human development. In other words, not all development concerns are also human security concerns, but when, in a particular time and place, an issue is serious enough to cross the human security threshold, then, in the language of Barry Buzan et al,¹⁰ if it is not dealt with, 'nothing else matters.' That is to say, it must be addressed with all of the resources and prescience that the *security* label warrants.
2. In the context of the attention given to democracy promotion in these recent reports, the threshold conceptualisation can help clarify the difference between human security and human development. While democracy may be a prerequisite for effective development, it need not be present to have human security. One can certainly imagine an undemocratic regime effectively providing basic human security—i.e., protection from significant loss of life. Whether this same state could provide adequate development is another matter entirely.¹¹ Indeed, what Newman notes as the very questioning of the sub-national applicability of the liberal peace thesis is a perfect example of this. Similarly, in light of the three stages of human security analysis, good governance and democracy¹²—or a lack there of—could be seen as either a root cause of insecurity or as a means of mitigating existing conditions, but certainly not as a threat in and of itself.
3. Regarding the analytic capability of the concept, the problem with most discussions of 'possible' threat interconnections is that they are absolutist in their causality and vulnerable to simplistic rhetorical and empirical critique. If one uses only those threats

that cross the human security threshold as dependant variables in a sub-national analysis, then one can overcome the questions of causality that often are raised against human security. These, of course, will be variable across time and region, but this local contextualisation is one of the advantages of human, rather than state-based, security.

4. Finally, the threshold could help overcome some of the difficulties that Newman highlights regarding humanitarian intervention. As the ICISS report makes clear, the international community, including many large developing nations, are willing to accept a loosening of sovereignty in extreme humanitarian emergencies. However, we need a framework in which to evaluate and act against these most severe threats. Most importantly, as the same report accentuates, the vast majority of the human insecurities can and should be dealt with using non military intervention. The three stages of human security analysis and the threshold threat identification process offer such a tool.

While the implicit use of human security in the Secretary-General's report is encouraging, the lack of an explicit reference to it is a set back, particularly in light of its prominence in the two precursor reports. However, part of the fault lies with proponents of the concept, who have failed to resolve significant conceptual ambiguities. Most importantly, how does such a broad concept, encompassing such necessarily diverse issues and actors, develop a collective identity that is neither artificially limiting nor unmanageably diverse, and that the international policy community, which is so clearly seeking a new theoretical and operational framework, can embrace?

Notes

¹ This short response will not examine each of these quite rich and significant reports, but rather discuss, in general terms, why the concept of human security is nominally absent from the Secretary-General's report.

² International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect*, (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, December 2001).

³ Clearly, this is partly do to the unfortunate coincidence of the report's release on September 10, 2001, and, more generally, to the failure of the report to significantly alter the language and strategic mechanisms of the war on terror.

⁴ For a broader discussion of this paradox, see: Taylor Owen, 'Measuring Human Security: Overcoming the Paradox,' *Human Security Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (October 2003);

and, Taylor Owen, 'Are we really secure?: Challenges and opportunities for defining and measuring human security,' *Disarmament Forum* 2 (June 2004).

⁵ For an overview of numerous broad conceptualizations see: Sabina Alkire, 'Concepts of Human Security,' in *Human Insecurity in a Global World*, ed. L. Chen, S. Fukuda-Parr and E. Seidensticker (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003); and Fen Osler Hampson and John B. Hay, 'Human Security: A Review of Scholarly Literature' (paper presented to the Canadian Consortium on Human Security Annual Meeting, Ottawa, April 2002).

⁶ Notably, Andrew Mack, Keith Krause and S. Neil Macfarlane, as well as the Canadian and Norwegian governments.

⁷ In 2000, approximately 310,000 people were killed due to war, 520,000 thousands due to homicide and 17,777,000 by communicable disease. Figures from: E. Krug et al, eds., *World Report on Violence and Health* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2002), 4; and World Health Organization, *World Health Report 2001* (Geneva: World Health Organisation, 2001), 114.

⁸ Newman has described the United Nations University's working definition, and I have proposed a quite similar one. For a range of others, see Peter Burgess and Taylor Owen, eds., Special Section on Human Security, *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (September 2004).

⁹ For further discussion of the threshold conceptualization, see: Taylor Owen, 'Human Security–Conflict, Critique and Consensus: Colloquium Remarks and a Proposal for a Threshold-Based Definition,' *Security Dialogue* 35, no. 3 (September 2004). It is important to note that terrorism would cross this threshold in very few cases.

¹⁰ B. Buzan et al, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

¹¹ This argument can be seen in light of post-conflict development. There is a case to be made that basic security—and I would define security broadly as including health, economic and environmental concerns, among others—should be ensured before democratisation and wider development takes place.

¹² Although Newman considers women's empowerment as a human security issue, I believe that it should also be viewed not as a human security threat, but as either a causal factor, and/or a mitigating mechanism.

S. NEIL MACFARLANE

Conventional analyses of the concept of security emphasise the state as the referent object; it is the state that is to be secured. The association of security with the state seemed natural for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and reflected the dominant position of realism in the discipline of international relations.¹ By the 1990s, this tight association increasingly was challenged, not least by the emergence of the idea of human security—an assertion of the security needs of the individual independently of, and sometimes in contradistinction to, those of the state.² However, there is very little that is new in this effort to reconceptualise security. Current discourse on human security is not merely a fad. It is a contemporary manifestation of a historically very deeply rooted conversation about the state, the human being and the responsibilities and obligations of each towards the other.

In this article, I examine the historical roots of the idea of human security. I first discuss proto-ideas concerning the state and security in the classical and medieval periods. I then move to an examination of the normative theories surrounding the emergence of the modern state (notably absolutism and liberal constitutionalism). This is followed by consideration of the rising role of nationalism and national security in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I conclude with a comment on the gradual evolution of norms and practices relevant to human security in the first half of the twentieth century.

In examining the historical and normative origins of the concept of human security, I acknowledge the risk of projecting contemporary concepts back into historical periods in which they did not exist. However, although the terms and concepts with which we discuss security have changed over time, the basic questions are as old as human society itself. Among these is the balance between the security of the state and that of the individual:

Why does the state—or polity—exist, and to what extent is its existence justified in terms of the protection of its people?

How absolute is the sovereignty of the state? What claims can the state impose on its citizens in its effort to survive, and in what ways do these claims impinge on the security of individuals? What are the limits on these claims?

Do states have a right or an obligation to interfere in the internal affairs of other states in order to protect individual subjects of the latter in the face of serious threats to their individual security?

To what extent is the state's conduct in war constrained by notions about the protection of civilians and the appropriate treatment of enemy combatants?

For much of the history of thinking about the state, it was conceived—at least in part—as an answer to individual and group security needs. This generally is accompanied by an implicit or explicit state obligation to protect its citizens. In cases in which the state fails to do so, or in which it becomes a threat to its own citizens, this diminishes the state's claim to the loyalty of its population. Put another way, the state often has been conceived as an answer to the human need for security, which is primary. Although the state's claim to a privileged position in matters of security grew stronger over time, it was rarely absolute and generally accompanied by varying degrees of qualification by principles that defended personal space vis-à-vis the political community.

The State and the Security of the Individual in the Pre-Modern Era

For be sure of this: It is the city that protects us all; she bears us through the storm; only when she rides safe and sound can we make loyal friends.

Creon, in *Antigone*.³

The emergence of the concept of state security usually is identified with the evolution of the international system from its medieval to its Westphalian variant. There were, however, reasonably clear antecedents to the notion in classical thought. These antecedents had a profound influence on later writers in the medieval and Westphalian periods.

The notion that the consolidation of the city-state was a precondition of civilised life is clear in Thucydides' observation that in early Greek history, all men carried arms to protect themselves against endemic violence, while later, the Athenians had no need to carry weapons because the power of the *polis* protected them. With their basic need for personal security satisfied, they could turn to more productive and pleasurable pursuits.⁴ Or, as Aristotle put it later, the city is 'the end and perfection of government: first founded *that we might live* [our emphasis], but continued that we might live happily.'⁵ It followed that the citizen was obliged to subordinate his ends to those of the *polis* when the latter was threatened,

because it was only in the *polis* that human beings could securely pursue their ends.⁶ There is little indication in Thucydides' work—or in that of other classical Greek writers—of a belief that the security claims of the individual might trump those of the state when the two diverged.

This said, however, there are faint echoes of concern about the concentration of power in the hands of a sovereign in the work of some Greek authors. Plato, for example, noted that 'no soul of man, while young or accountable to no control, will ever be able to bear the burden of supreme social authority without taking the taint of the worst spiritual disease, folly, and so becoming estranged from its dearest intimates.'⁷ The 'self-caused blindness' associated with 'irresponsible autocratic sovereignty' would sink the ruler and his community 'in depths of ruin.'⁸

In addition, there was in Greek thought some recognition of the desirability of constraint in the organised use of violence against civilians in war. This view appeared to rest on a rudimentary idea of rights pertaining to human beings. For example, Plato suggested in *The Republic* that the enslavement of Greeks by Greeks should be abolished along with the stripping of corpses on the battlefield and the ravaging of land and the burning of fields in war.⁹ Some have suggested that this is an early precursor of what later came to be *jus in bello*.¹⁰ More to the point here, these principles suggest some sentiment that the property and survival rights of individuals—or at least Greek individuals—were worthy of protection, and that states should take this into account in their ways of war.¹¹

Roman law tended to concentrate power, authority and law in the hands of the ruler.¹² Since the state, in the person of the ruler, was the source of the law, the absolute, divine ruler could not be subject to the law. There was no obvious contestation of the primacy of the state's claims to security and the corresponding obligations of individuals to the state.

During the Roman period, the question of individual responsibility to the state also arose in early Christian doctrine in several respects. One concerned the obligation to pay taxes to the Roman government. The Gospels are clear in their acceptance of obligation to the state.¹³ More broadly, Peter's first epistle is clear in its insistence on Christian submission to the (pagan) state: 'Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him to punish evildoers.'¹⁴ In St. Augustine's view, it was government that brought the order and peace from which Christians and others benefited.¹⁵ In consequence, obedience to the state was a Christian duty.

Given the Gospels' teaching regarding violence, the issue of military obligation was particularly problematic. Was soldiering antithetical to the teachings of the Church? The answer, again, was fairly clearly negative. The Gospels refrain from condemning soldiers. Augustine discusses at length John the Baptist's response to the soldiers who came to be baptised,¹⁶ concluding that 'the natural order which seeks the peace of mankind ordains that a monarch should have the power of undertaking war if he thinks it advisable, and that the soldiers should perform their military duties in behalf of the peace and safety of the community' and went on to note that a soldier had a duty to be obedient, whether or not the command was 'righteous'.¹⁷

On the other hand, in Roman law, there are certain principles suggesting an attenuation of the sovereign right of rulers. The ruler cannot misuse his authority (the *leges imperii*). The natural law principles in Justinian's codes bound the ruler to abide by promises and to respect the family (personal space). The doctrine of *lex regia* maintained that power derived from the people. In short, there is evidence of consideration of the attenuation of sovereignty and a degree of obligation on the part of the sovereign towards those whom he ruled. Indeed, *in extremis*, there were, at least from a Justinian perspective, justifications for resistance to unjust agents of authority. These principles reflected a strain of natural law thinking that may be traced from Aristotle to Cicero—the notion that 'there existed a universal law of nature outside and beyond the *polis*'.¹⁸

Turning to the issue of conduct in war, the Roman landscape is a depressing one; little appears by way of constraint—legal or other—on conduct in war, including with respect to wounded or captured combatants or towards enemy civilians. Early Christian thought, although focused principally on *jus ad bellum* (the justification of war), does display some concern regarding conduct in war. Augustine's work on the subject is illustrative. He considered the real evil in war to be the 'love of violence, revengeful cruelty [and] fierce and implacable enmity.' The implication therein that restraint should be exercised towards the enemy, including civilians, is evident later in the same passage, where he suggests: 'Even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peace-maker, that, by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantage of peace ... As violence is used towards him who rebels and resists, so mercy is due to the vanquished or the captive ...'¹⁹

The Medieval Era

The collapse of the Roman Empire resulted in a radical decentralisation of power. Since the state as we understand it did not exist during the

'Dark Ages,' the idea of loyalty to the state, or giving the ends of the state a priority greater than that accorded to those of the individual or group, was also weak—if it existed at all.²⁰

The chaos that followed the collapse of the Roman Empire gradually coalesced into medieval feudalism. The medieval system was characterised by a hierarchy of often overlapping loyalties, duties and obligations and a considerable diffusion of power. The Church was deemed universal in the spiritual realm, paralleling the secular structure of the Holy Roman Empire. The Empire held relatively loose control over its territories. Its position was increasingly contested by monarchs. Their position was challenged, in turn, by much more numerous, powerful vassals. Territory passed freely from one kingdom or duchy to another through marriage and private war. Conflict was endemic. Society was highly militarised, with the rudimentary economy of the countryside organised around the maintenance of local military forces.²¹

The fragmented quality of the state system in medieval Europe was accompanied by frequent localised lapses into chaos. This instability contributed to considerable ambiguity in thinking about the relationship between political authority and its subjects as that relationship impinged on security. On the one hand, canon law embraced the Roman doctrine of *plenitudo potestas* as a necessary aspect of sustaining a modicum of order and personal security. The acceptance of 'full power' to the sovereign reflected not only considerations of divine legitimacy, but also a sensitivity to the consequences of challenge to the power of the sovereign.

That the embrace of absolute notions of monarchical sovereignty and power was incomplete is evident in the work of Thomas Aquinas (1225 or 1227-1274). His major contribution was the recovery of classical work on man and the state in contemporary thinking about political organisation. For Aquinas, drawing on the classical natural law tradition mentioned above, the effect of original sin was mitigated by man's rationality and, consequently, his capacity for improvement. Man's rational capacity made it possible for him to discern God-given natural law. The purpose of the state and ruler was to establish the good life: conditions in which the individual could improve himself. In this respect, the political community was instrumental 'to securing human goods which are basic (including other forms of community or association, especially domestic and religious associations) and none of which is in itself specifically political, i.e., concerned with the state.'²² The state's authority to regulate human conduct extended only to those actions that affected the public goods that were necessary conditions for the pursuit of individual

fulfilment: 'The state's rulers cannot rightly intervene in private relationships and transactions to secure purposes other than justice and peace.'²³

The existence of natural law implied restraint on the state and on its authority:

Underlying all legal arrangements were certain universal ethical and spiritual principles to be perceived by reason. What is significant in this early view of natural law is that, within the reasonable framework of social life, there were rules and principles that even rulers had to obey.²⁴

Such limitations clearly informed Aquinas' attitude towards tyranny. Given that tyrants governed in their own interest, rather than in that of the community as a whole, people were entitled to disobey.²⁵ This was not just a matter of Roman and canon law. Customary law also suggested that the monarch was not perceived to be 'the' law or to be above the law, but was to a degree subject to the law.²⁶ The Magna Carta (1215) made explicit the view that the sovereign's authority was conditional, depending on his or her performance of defined duties and respect for established rights. The document also provided for provision for the right of rebellion (of the nobility) in the event that the monarch or his agents overstepped agreed bounds.²⁷

A similar trend was evident within the Church late in the medieval period. The 1352 Church Council established the principle that papal election depended on the Pope fulfilling certain duties. The effort to end the late fourteenth century (1378-1410) schism at the Council of Constance also drew into question the absolute power of the Pope. If, as the Council decided, the Pope was to be chosen by a council that represented the Church, then the Council was in some sense superior to the Pope.²⁸ Later, in the context of the Counter-Reformation, some Thomists rooted their analysis of the state firmly in notions of consent and the rights of the populace, and opposed emergent absolutism. In the extreme, they accepted that tyrannicide might be justifiable. In other words, several strands of medieval thinking on politics suggest that those in authority were constrained in their actions by obligations to their subjects, a point that is central to the current consideration of human security and the corresponding conditionality of the state's sovereignty.

Similar observations may be made about the very gradual evolution of norms of conduct in war in the medieval period. Violence was widespread in medieval Europe. Knights and their retainers fought in service of their suzerain's cause or in that of God; they also fought among themselves and they often 'brought violence to villagers, clerics, townspeople and merchants.'²⁹ Knightly violence was a significant source of concern for public order. In turn, it was one major source of efforts on the part of monarchs, often strongly supported by the populace, to centralise their domains.

The just war doctrine that evolved during this period accepted the necessity of violence in pursuit of order or for religious ends: 'As the popular saying goes, "wrong must be done to put an end to a worse thing."' ³⁰ But, doctrine clearly argued for limitations on the use of violence against civilians and their property, based on principles of proportionality and discrimination in the use of force. Both principles seem based on the idea that those waging war are morally bound to make efforts to limit the damage to civilian interests. Although such principles were often deemed to apply specifically to war between Christians, Counter-Reformation thinkers of sixteenth century Spain—such as Vitoria and Diego Suarez—extended such obligations to the treatment of non-Christian populations on the basis of the universality of natural law. We have seen thus far how, where the rights of individuals were recognised, this tended to occur within the context of defined cultural communities (the Greeks, the Romans, the Christians). Some Counter-Reformation thinking challenged this directly in its emphasis on the unity of the human race.³¹

The Westphalian Consolidation

As time passed from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, there was a gradual consolidation of political and economic structures into entities that began to resemble modern states. The consolidation of the state in Europe was accompanied by a considerable evolution in perspectives on sovereignty, the power of the sovereign, the constraints on that power and what all of this meant for the individual subject of the state.

The process of state-building was accompanied by incessant conflict both between and within Europe's monarchies. Civil war convulsed England, France and the Habsburg domains in the Low Countries. It had a profound influence on thinking about the state: 'The Civil War experience, specifically in its religious context, led many to tie in justice and order with the mere survival of the State, and to reject claims that any Church, religious principle, or natural law had precedence over the continuity of civil law and the sovereign prince.'³²

Absolutism

The internal and external violence of the period produced an ideology that emphasised the concentration of power in the state, the doctrine of dynastic legitimacy as a basis for rule and the absolutist theory of sov-

ereignty.³³ Here we see the first reasonably unequivocal modern claim that the state, in the person of the monarch, was the primary referent in discourse on security. As Jean Bodin viewed it, in a clear departure from medieval natural law perspectives, the monarch as sovereign enjoyed absolute power to make the law and to command all other groups and individuals.³⁴ The state did not exist outside the monarch. As such, he was not subject to law, and his sovereignty could not be shared. It followed that the state/monarch's behaviour towards his/her citizens was not, in the abstract, constrained by reciprocal obligations and established rights.

There were two major strands of absolutism, reflecting very different approaches to the problem of legitimisation. One was divine right—the proposition that the monarch ruled as God's agent. Just as God ruled the universe, the monarch ruled his or her domain.³⁵ In this variant, the divine authority of the pope and the emperor had shifted to the person of the king. Power came from above and was not rooted in consent from below. Nor, given its origin, could it be contested from below.

The second, and secular, strand was contractarian and associated principally with the work of Thomas Hobbes.³⁶ Hobbes' *Leviathan* is the first major work that set out the human dilemma in the modern terms of 'security.' As he put it, 'The final cause, end, or design of men, who naturally love liberty, and dominion over others, in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves, in which we see them live in commonwealths, is the foresight of their own preservation, and of a more contented life thereby; that is to say, of getting themselves out from that miserable condition of war, which is necessarily consequent ... to the natural passions of men.'³⁷

Here, men traded their liberty and rights to the state for the security permitting them to live orderly lives. Individual sovereignty, once given up, could not be reclaimed in the event that the monarch did not abide by his side of the bargain. The sovereign possessed the natural rights of subjects. The notion that individuals, on grounds of natural rights, could contest legitimately the actions of the sovereign appeared to lack meaning.

Bodin's and Hobbes' views led to the doctrine of *raison d'état*. The ends of the state (and, most notably, the power of the state) were paramount, and justified the means. *Raison d'état* implied that 'statesmen cannot be bound in public affairs by the morality they would respect in private life ...' The defence of the public interest justified unscrupulous behaviour.³⁸ As Machiavelli put it, 'It is good to defend one's country in whatever way it be done, whether it entail ignominy or glory.'³⁹

Once again, there are important qualifications in the theory of absolutism. It would be incorrect, for example, to suggest that the doctrine of *raison d'état* was devoid of moral content. After all, at least in the contractarian variant, the justification of the state's primacy was its protection of the 'public interest' and of the citizens who, in an original sense, authorised it to govern.⁴⁰

Moreover, many proponents of absolutism accepted the distinction between the person as sovereign and the office as sovereign. The individual ruler could 'embody supreme authority,' but the authority itself resided in the office, not the person. The power possessed by the monarch was not his property, but was to be used to further the interests of the realm. Reminiscent of the legal limits on Roman imperial power, the monarch could not use the office for personal gain or alienate the state's property.⁴¹ Despite his embrace of the absolute monarchy, Bodin recognised the existence of important constraints on the sovereign's exercise of power by the sovereign, including natural law,⁴² and customary obligations.⁴³

Two qualifications on Hobbes' view of absolute sovereignty are also important to thinking about human security. The first concerned the individual motive for contracting, which was the fear of death. Although Hobbes generally took a once-and-for-all view of the act of consent, if the sovereign threatened the individual with death, then the contract was void. The second qualification concerned the capacity of the sovereign to fulfil his end of the bargain. If the sovereign could no longer fulfil the function for which he was given power, then he 'is no longer owed obedience, is no longer indeed a sovereign.'⁴⁴ This is an early statement of the proposition that a sovereign's legitimate power is diminished in situations in which the state is either itself a threat to the individual or in which it is either unwilling or unable to defend the individual in the face of endogenous or exogenous threats.

In short, even in the absolutist tradition, we see important qualifications on the omnipotence of sovereigns. These qualifications prefigure the contemporary discussion of human security.

Constitutionalism

Moreover, absolutism was not the only game in town in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The principal challenge to the untrammelled rights and power of the state that derived from its protective mandate lay in liberal constitutionalist theory. Here too, the principal

justification for the concentration of power in the state was the human need for security and protection. The state was 'a voluntary society constituted for mutual protection.'⁴⁵ The constitutionalist tradition is strongly contractarian. Individuals in their pre-political state were assumed to be rational and possessed of rights as a result of their humanity. These individuals entered into a contract to create the Commonwealth—a state structured to serve the interests of these free and rational individuals, and, notably, to maximise their liberty and defend the commonwealth's security.⁴⁶ The contractarian logic was complemented by reference to traditional rights and custom that constrained the power of the monarch.

It was also in this period that theorists came to argue that the natural law that implied constraint on the sovereign also implied natural or human rights (justified claims held by human beings qua human beings and attributed to all human beings on account of their humanity⁴⁷). Rights pertaining to individuals were seen to be limits on both other individuals and political authorities.⁴⁸ Government existed to sustain these individual rights (life, liberty, property). When a monarch transgressed the boundaries of his jurisdiction, or infringed on the rights of individuals, people had a right to resist. The American Revolution was seen by Edmund Burke, for example, as a legitimate rebellion against the metropole's effort to overstep the rightful boundaries of power.⁴⁹

Intervention on Humanitarian Grounds

This leads us to consideration of what the rights and obligations of outsiders might be in the face of a ruler's gross abuse of his or her subjects. This question, so topical in current accounts of human security, had little meaning in the pre-Westphalian context. It comes up in the context of the growing acceptance of principles of sovereignty in the Westphalian context and in the crystallisation of the associated principle of non-intervention in the work of Christian von Wolff and Emmerich de Vattel. On the one hand, the doctrine of sovereignty would suggest that such action was impermissible. On the other hand, natural law perspectives and their extension into natural rights⁵⁰ suggest solidarity amongst human beings that may involve obligations to those in other states.⁵¹

The Peace of Westphalia, widely considered to have laid the legal basis for the modern interpretation of sovereignty, included provision for the rights of members of religious minorities within particular jurisdictions. To a limited degree, therefore, the founding acts of the

modern international system contained some qualification of sovereignty in the event that the contract between state and citizens broke down or was fulfilled incompletely. Similar provisions were contained in the treaties of Nijmegen and Ryswick concerning the disposition of territories in the Netherlands between France and Spain.⁵² Towards the end of the period, Kant's recognition of a universal right of mankind, and his belief that the failure to respect rights in one jurisdiction would undermine these rights elsewhere, would appear to justify intervention in defence of these rights. All seemed to suggest that sovereignty might not protect an abusive tyrant from those outside his state considering the use of force to defend the rights of those being abused.⁵³

The final point here concerns state and societal perspectives on the protection of civilians from violence in war. The longstanding concern over the treatment of civilians in war persisted through this period. Alberico Gentili, for example, argued for sparing women, children and priests in war on the grounds of 'humaneness.' Hugo Grotius' notion of *temperamenta belli* betrays a similar sentiment in its plea for moderation in war with respect to, for example, the treatment of prisoners and enemy property.⁵⁴ Vattel, while considering the entire population of enemy states to be enemies, argued that, as a matter of justice and humanity, military forces had no right to molest peasants or their property, women, children, the aged or sick if they proffered no resistance. He also suggested that the 'established' laws of war, including the principle of humanity, should apply to civil as well as international conflicts.⁵⁵ There was also evidence from practice of the emergence of norms concerning the protection of civilians in armed conflict; the Swedish Articles of War, issued at the outset of the campaign against Russia in the Baltics in 1621, included rules prohibiting 'assaults on women, unauthorised attacks on towns and villages, theft, and pillage or burning of churches and hospitals.'⁵⁶

By way of conclusion, three aspects of the analysis should be emphasised. First, throughout the period of consolidation of the Westphalian system, the state was—to varying degrees—justified by its role in protecting the individuals within its territories. That is to say, it was recognised that the state had obligations to individuals within its territory. Custom and fundamental law commonly was perceived to limit state power to its own functional jurisdiction. Second, as the state grew stronger, and as its claim to sovereignty in the sense of control over territories under its jurisdiction grew increasingly credible, the challenge to its absolute power in the form of individual rights and popular sovereignty increased in intensity.

The doctrine of popular sovereignty reached its apogee in the revolutions of the late eighteenth century in France and the United States. The sovereignty of the political community lay with the people and, as Rousseau suggested, was expressed in the citizens' decisions in a participatory democratic framework. Through participatory democracy, the act of consent to the political arrangement was ongoing. The individual's sovereignty was, thereby, transferred to the collective, embodied in the state and the general will of the nation.

One sees here the beginnings of a conflation between state and community that, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, grew into the concept of the 'nation-state.' The security of the state became the security of the nation and of individuals as part of the nation, whose identity was defined through their participation in the nation. The state became the person. There was little scope for consideration of the security claims of individuals inside or below the state, because the claims of state and people were synonymous. The continual act of consent presumed an obligation to comply. Challenging a state based on the general will was to reject this obligation and to challenge the community itself. As the French Revolution demonstrated, the state, expressing what elites of the day claimed to be the general will, was not obviously subject to traditional or customary constraint.

In the Romantic postlude to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution and revolutionary wars, nationalism and national identity developed in a more cultural direction, particularly in Germany, but also farther south and east. Johann Gottfried von Herder, for example, suggested that the nation—a group possessing common blood, culture, language and historical tradition—was a natural phenomenon. The potential of the individual could be realised only within this collective.⁵⁷ This conception of community was organic; the nation was a living thing, imbued with mind, soul and destiny and entitled to statehood. When combined later in the nineteenth century with social Darwinism, many came to see relations between nations as a permanent struggle for survival of the fittest.

The individual human being had no obvious place in this structure. The conception of the state as the embodiment of popular sovereignty, or as an organic union of the nation reflected in a general will, justified and thereby facilitated the personification of the state.

However, the growing dominance of the nation-state and military affairs in discourse on security did not eclipse completely concerns for individual human beings and their security. First, modern European states took their responsibilities to protect individuals increasingly seriously during the nineteenth century. The development of modern police forces reflected not only a concern to protect property and to control opposition, but also a desire to enhance the physical security of citizens.

The second concern was the gradual emergence of an international prohibition on the slave trade and, to a more limited extent, on slavery itself. In a strict system of state sovereignty, there was no obvious justification for such interference with trade and the domestic affairs of other recognised states, nor any obvious power-political reason to do so. The only basis for the action was a belief that basic human rights were universal and that states had the right, if not the obligation, to act internationally to promote the rights of non-citizens living in other jurisdictions.

The anti-slavery effort was linked to the third concern—the effort in the late nineteenth century, and specifically at the Congress of Berlin (1884-5), to oblige Belgium's Leopold II to respect the rights of his indigenous subjects in the Congo as a condition of recognition of possession. Although colonial subjects did not have the same rights as citizens of states, 'the very recognition of limits on a fellow sovereign's discretion in the disposition of his human assets was significant.'⁵⁸ So too was the apparent belief that other powers had the *right* to establish such conditions.

The fourth concerned the efforts on the European Concert's efforts to address minority issues within other states. The Congress of Vienna (1815) carried on with the practice of including limited qualifications of sovereignty on the grounds of minority rights and took it forward in at least two important respects. First, in the provisions of the Vienna Final Act dealing with the transfer of the people of Bern and the bishopric of Basel into the Canton of Bern and Basel, the people concerned were guaranteed 'equal political and civil rights' in a significant extension of protection beyond religious freedoms. Second, in this act, the great powers also extended protections to national (e.g., the Poles), in addition to religious, minorities.⁵⁹

Later in the nineteenth century, the great powers' attention turned increasingly to the plight of Christian peoples in the Ottoman Empire. The great powers' decisions in this domain were coloured profoundly by

considerations of strategic interest.⁶⁰ None the less, they betrayed some sense of an obligation to suffering individuals within other jurisdictions. Moreover, they sought to justify their interventions in terms of the *safety* of subjects of another state. When new states began to emerge out of the rubble of the Ottoman Empire in Europe, the great powers stipulated in the Treaty of Berlin (1878) that states becoming independent must make provision for the respect of minority, national and religious rights within their territories.

These provisions reflected the imposition of a 'standard of civilisation' that went well beyond the minimalist criteria of recognition.⁶¹ The great powers believed that the treaty gave them the right of intervention in the case of non-fulfilment of these commitments. The Concert powers cooperated to complete the liberation of Greece, and members of the Concert intervened to defend Maronite Christians in Lebanon in the 1860s on humanitarian grounds. In this period of the primacy of the sovereign state, concerns over the security of individual subjects and groups within states increasingly were deemed to be legitimate in international discourse.

The fifth concern, over the protection of individuals was also evident in the evolution of *jus in bello* during the nineteenth century. Although there was little progress in developing multilateral instruments to protect civilians in war, the period under consideration witnessed substantial efforts at the national level to regulate their treatment. The Lieber Code regulating U.S. Army behaviour in the Civil War prohibited 'all wanton violence committed against persons in the invaded country, all destruction of property not commanded by the authorised officer, all robbery, pillage or sacking, even after taking a place by main force, all rape, wounding, maiming or killing of such inhabitants' under the penalty of death or severe punishment.⁶² The code was used as a model for the laws of war manuals of numerous other countries, including the Netherlands, France, Serbia, Spain, Portugal and Italy.⁶³

However, the distinction between 'civilised' and 'uncivilised' peoples persisted in the practice of the major Western powers, particularly in reference to colonial subjects and indigenous peoples. The existence of military/legal constraints vis-à-vis civilians did not prevent the U.S. military from participating in acts of genocide against the Native American inhabitants of their own country. The spread of principles of civilian immunity in Europe did little to prevent the near elimination of the Herero people in German Southwest Africa.

Finally, there is the evolution of norms and practice regarding soldiers wounded in war. The Geneva Convention for the Relief of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field (1864) recognised the neu-

trality of ambulances, field hospitals and medical personnel, while granting immunity to the wounded. This convention codified principles that had been customary through much of the eighteenth century but that had weakened over the first half of the nineteenth. The key point here lies in the explicit recognition by states of obligations concerning the protection of citizens of other states in war. The same was true in the later nineteenth century effort to eliminate particularly cruel forms of weaponry.⁶⁴

The Individual and Security between the World Wars

After World War I, the victorious powers established the League of Nations as a collective security mechanism to promote peace in international relations. The League was a security organisation, but its conception of security was overwhelmingly statist. The focus of the organisation was to prevent the resort to war by member states. There was little in the League's Covenant concerning human beings, their rights or their individual security.

However, several aspects of the Covenant and of subsequent League practice are important precursors of later developments in the realm of human security. One example is the mandate system. Mandatory powers were to govern their new territories in a manner that recognised that the development and well-being of subject peoples was a sacred trust of civilisation. They accepted reporting requirements that reinforced the conditional quality of their possession. This did not work particularly well, but the mandate provisions sowed the seeds of later efforts to conditionalise sovereign control over colonial territories on state performance with regard to the citizens of the territories in question.

Two other aspects of League activities also bear mention as precursors to later thinking about the security of individuals and groups. The Entente powers' effort to characterise their struggle as one to promote freedom carried some obligation to defend 'individual and group claims against the state' once the war was over.⁶⁵ One manifestation of this was the effort to defend and promote minority rights in Central Europe. The Entente made recognition or enlargement of Central European successor states conditional on their acceptance of national minority guarantees.⁶⁶ A number of treaties concluded with successor states included provisions for the protection of minority rights, and for eventual reconsideration of the post-war territorial settlement on the basis of referendum (e.g., Upper Silesia and Saarland). This implied the attenuation of state sovereignty by state acceptance of international obligations to particular groups within its

borders. Although this was, in some respects, a continuation of practices evident in the nineteenth century, the mechanisms for implementation of these commitments were substantially more ambitious.

A second precursor concerned evolving norms and practice regarding refugees.⁶⁷ Prior to World War I, there was no international protection of refugees.⁶⁸ This changed substantially in the interwar period. After the Russian Revolution, the Entente powers faced a growing problem of flight from Russia. Those displaced frequently landed without papers and, consequently, lacked a formal legal identity. They also lacked consular access to obtain relevant documents. There was no legal regime to protect them. They had no right to work. Further travel was problematic, given tightening controls on cross-border movement and immigration. In response, the League appointed a High Commissioner for Refugees, Fridtjof Nansen, who led the negotiation of a 1922 interstate agreement on legal protection for displaced Russians, persuading governments to register refugees and provide them with documents. In addition, signatories agreed to accept travel documents—the ‘Nansen Passport’—issued by the High Commissioner to stateless Russians. Nansen and his colleagues also played an important role in the response to the refugee crisis in 1922 occasioned by the war between Greece and Turkey.

Some years later, in 1938, in response to the expulsion of Jews from Germany and Austria, a conference was convened at Évian-les-Bains. Although few states ratified the convention that resulted, and it provided little or no protection to Jews caught up in the impending Holocaust, its specification of rights enjoyed by these persons was an important milestone in embedding principles of refugee protection in treaty law.

Several elements of these efforts directed at the problem of displacement stand out. Implementation responsibilities rested with governments; the autonomous role of international institutions was correspondingly circumscribed. The attitude of governments reflected considerable reluctance to grant rights to stateless and displaced persons. This reluctance grew with time, particularly in regard to Jewish refugees.⁶⁹ International mechanisms addressing this problem focused on particular populations—the Russians, or, later, refugees from the Third Reich; there was little effort to establish general principles of protection.

All of this said, however, the international effort to address the issue of refugees suggests an appreciation that the security of these individuals constituted a matter of legitimate international concern. It is hard to account for this concern in terms of state interest narrowly defined.⁷⁰ After all, the states in question simply could have sent these people back to where they had come from, or moved them on elsewhere.

Turning to the law of war, we see in this period an effort to codify principles governing the treatment of civilians, a matter largely avoided during the last half of the nineteenth century.⁷¹ This began during the war and continued after the conclusion of hostilities. It ran into significant difficulty in the face of a lack of enthusiasm on the part of states party to the Conventions. The 1929 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Conference considered a convention on the subject, but made little progress. The ICRC responded by preparing a more detailed convention on the protection of enemy civilians in territory controlled by a belligerent power, which was accepted at the 1934 Tokyo Conference. The limited parameters of this protection are worth stressing. Civilian populations targeted in their home country were not covered. Nor were actions of a belligerent power against elements of its own population. Movement towards more complete legal recognition of the rights of civilians and the duties of states derived from those rights was halted by the recurrence of world war.

In summary, normative developments during the interwar period were of considerable significance to our subject in at least three respects. First, with regard to both the mandatory territories and minorities in Central Europe, we see the beginnings of a recovery of an approach to international relations that left some space for the rights and claims of individuals and groups, as opposed to states. Second, the interwar period was an important precursor to the development of the post-World War II refugee regime, in that states became accustomed to the problem of mass displacement and to multilateral efforts to address it. In a perhaps more profound sense, they came to accept, albeit in a very limited way, the notion that persons displaced across borders and lacking the protection of their own state needed an alternative basis for their security. Third, there was slow progress in the effort to enhance the individual security of civilians caught up in armed conflict.

Conclusion

The idea that the protection of citizens—or subjects—is a fundamental responsibility of the state is a very old one. Organised polities generally have been justified in terms of their role and capacity in the protection of human beings living within their borders. Even in instances of absolute—divine right or secularly based—claims to sovereignty, as in the Roman period or in the period of Westphalian absolutism, these claims were mitigated to some degree by functional jurisdictional definition, by

the persistence of custom and fundamental law and by recognised obligations to subjects.

The contractarian tradition makes these obligations more explicit. The metaphor of contract involves citizens 'trading' some portion of their rights and freedoms for protection and other services of the state. The metaphor implies that, where the state fails to fulfil its side of the bargain (either by failing to protect or by becoming itself a threat to the security of the citizen), then the validity of the contract would be in question and the justification for prioritising the claims of the state to security would be in jeopardy. Even the absolutist form of contractarian theory recognised that considerations of individual survival trumped state sovereignty and that, to the extent that a state could not protect its citizens, its sovereignty was correspondingly diminished.

The strongest claims to the primacy of considerations of *state* security came out of the nationalist tradition that merged the citizen into the nation and the nation into the state. Here too, however, the claim frequently was qualified by growing recognition of individual rights with respect to the state and also by the evolving constraints on state practice, externally and internally, in the laws of war. Between the two world wars, moreover, the primacy of considerations of state security was also mitigated to a limited extent by the concerns of international institutions (the League) and non-state actors such as the ICRC with respect to particular groups (national minorities, residents of territorial mandates, particular populations of refugees).

The question of what obligations and rights states may have in relation to the systematic oppression or injustice within the border of other states also predates the modern era, although in weak form.

In short, much of what has come to be seen as the normative agenda of human security has been present through history. What we now consider to be 'human security' concerns grew significantly stronger in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, despite the primacy of the sovereign state. Moreover, emergent norms on, for example, the conduct of war, the treatment of minorities within other states and the internationally recognised rights of individuals tended to be limited to the European state system for much of the period under consideration in this article. By the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, we see an unmistakable move towards the universalisation of such norms.

¹ Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, eds., *Critical Security Studies: Concepts and Cases* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). On the dominance of statist realism, see also Michael Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace* (New York: Norton, 1997), 42.

² The content of this idea is a matter of considerable debate, notably between those who focus on the development dimension and those who focus on basic human rights. My focus in this discussion is on the protection of human beings from organised violence.

³ Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. H.D.F. Kitto (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 9.

⁴ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (London: Penguin, 1954), I., 6-7.

⁵ Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. William Ellis (London: J.M. Dent, 1947), 3.

⁶ One could go further to note that, in classical Greek political thought, there was little conception of the individual as subject. Individualism was alien to the Greek tradition: 'The city was prior to any individual.' Andrew Vincent, *Theories of the State* (Oxford: Blackwell's Publishers, 1987), 13.

⁷ Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), *Laws III*, para.691.c-d, 1286. See also *Ibid.*, IV, para. 713.c, 1304.

⁸ *Ibid.*, IX, para. 875.b-c, 1434.

⁹ Plato, *The Republic V*, para.469-471, in Hamilton and Cairns, *Collected Dialogues of Plato*, 708-711.

¹⁰ Martin Wight suggested that this passage 'has been regarded as one of the earliest pleas for the rule of law in international relations.' Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), 51.

¹¹ Wight notes, however, that Plato's comment on international relations makes up three pages of a 300-page work, suggesting that relations between city-states were not a major preoccupation of Plato or other Greek writers. Wight, *Systems of States*, 51.

¹² Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 48. The Roman view of the powers of the ruler was an important source of absolutist thinking, about which, more below.

¹³ See the exchange reported in Matt. 22:17-21.

¹⁴ 1 Pet. 2:13-14. Dino Bigongiari interprets this as an injunction to cooperate in governments' efforts to repress violence with violence. Henry Paolucci and Dino Bigongiari, eds., *Augustine: Political Writings* (Chicago: Gateway, 1962), xix.

¹⁵ 'Natural Law and Civil Right,' in Paolucci and Bigongiari, *Augustine: Political Writings*, 162. Elsewhere, in a statement that strikingly prefigures contractarian theory, Augustine declared: 'For what is a republic but a commonwealth? Therefore,

its interests are common to all; they are the interests of the state. Now what is a state but a multitude of men (sic) bound together by some bond of concord.'

¹⁶ 'And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.' Luke 3:14.

¹⁷ 'Contra Faustum,' in Paolucci and Bigongiari, *Augustine: Political Writings*, 163-4, 165.

¹⁸ Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 83.

¹⁹ 'Contra Faustum,' 164, 182-3.

²⁰ J.M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Barbarian West, 400-1000* (London: Hutheson, 1956).

²¹ William H. McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power: Technology, Armed Force, and Society since A.D. 1000* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 63. Interestingly, McNeill's characterisation of the evolution of early feudalism has a distinctly contractarian flavour, in which local populations provided sustenance to a warrior class in return for protection from 'threatening outsiders.'

²² On this point, see John Finnis, *Aquinas: Moral, Legal and Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 229, 231, 235. The quotation is from 247.

²³ *Ibid.*, 252.

²⁴ Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 83-4.

²⁵ Aquinas favoured constitutional arrangements limiting the power of kings, so that they could not fall into tyranny easily. Finnis, Aquinas, 261.

²⁶ See the discussion of obligation in the English coronation oath. Henry de Bracton, *On the Laws and Customs of England*, trans. Samuel E. Thorne (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).

²⁷ Magna Carta, British Museum translation, para. 61. <https://www.bl.uk/collections/treasures/magnatranslation.html>. It is noteworthy that this clause was removed from later versions of the charter.

²⁸ Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 86.

²⁹ Richard Kaeuper, *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 8.

³⁰ Orderic, *Ecclesiastical History, Book VI*, trans. and ed. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969-1980), 348-9.

³¹ Suarez, as cited in Wight, *Systems of States*, 125-6.

³² Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 70. See also Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace: Realism, Liberalism, and Socialism* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1997), 112.

³³ It is generally accepted that absolutist theories of the State were a product of civil war and an effort to address the human costs of such wars. Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 48, 52.

³⁴ As he put it, 'Sovereignty, then, is not limited either in power, or in function, or in length of time.' Jean Bodin, *On Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 3.

³⁵ The roots of this view in Roman law doctrines of plenitudo potestas and princeps legibus solutus are clear.

³⁶ Contractarian theorists, on the whole, did not claim that the contract was a historical artefact; instead, the concept of contract was a metaphor, reflecting the nature of the relationship between the sovereign and those whom he governed. Alasdair MacIntyre has suggested that, in the absence of reference to divine authority, 'some doctrine of social contract must underlie any claim to legitimacy.' In the absence of the web of feudal obligations tying monarch and subjects together, and given the obviously arbitrary quality of divine right, 'the state must fall back, on appeal, implicit or explicit, to social contract.' Alasdair MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 155-6.

³⁷ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), III.

³⁸ Wight, *Power Politics* (Leicester: Leicester University Press and the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), 29.

³⁹ Quoting Lentulus. Niccolo Machiavelli, 'The Discourses,' in *The Prince and the Discourses* (New York: Random House, 1950), 527.

⁴⁰ Robert Jackson, *The Global Covenant: Human Conduct in a World of States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 115.

⁴¹ Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 62.

⁴² As Bodin put it, 'But if the prince forbids killing on penalty of death, is he not then bound by his own law? I say this law is not his law but the law of God and of nature, to which he cannot be dispensed either by the Senate or the people, and for which he is always answerable to the judgement of God ...' Bodin, *On Sovereignty*, 31.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 40-42, 21, 81.

⁴⁴ MacIntyre, *A Short History of Ethics*, p.133-4. Hobbes recognises that where 'there is no protection of subjects in their loyalty; then is the commonwealth dissolved, and every man at liberty to protect himself.' Hobbes, *Leviathan* XXIX.23. See also *ibid.*, XXI.21.

⁴⁵ See Doyle, *Ways of War and Peace*, 214-218.

⁴⁶ This was not merely a theoretical proposition. John Locke, like many constitutional thinkers of the period, held that most monarchies in Europe were originally elective. Locke, II, para. 106.

⁴⁷ Vincent, *Theories of the State*, 105. The essence of the natural rights position was summed up well by Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative: to do to others what one would wish and expect others to do to oneself.' Immanuel Kant, 'Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals,' as cited in Jackson, *The Global Covenant*, 416.

⁴⁸ See Immanuel Kant, 'The Science of Right,' in *Great Books of the Western World*, ed. R.M. Hutchins (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), xlii, 401, where he stresses the 'innate right' of freedom.

⁴⁹ We are indebted to our colleague Jennifer Welsh for this point.

⁵⁰ It has been suggested that Hugo Grotius, in particular, transformed the law of nature into 'an injunction to "respect one another's rights."' R. J. Vincent (citing Richard Tuck), 'Grotius, Human Rights, and Intervention,' in *Hugo Grotius and International Relations*, ed. Hedley Bull, Benedict Kingsbury and Adam Roberts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 241-2.

⁵¹ On this point, see Simon Chesterman's comment on Alberico Gentili, in Simon Chesterman, *Just War or Just Peace?: Humanitarian Intervention and International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 14.

⁵² Jennifer Jackson-Preece, *National Minorities and the European Nation-States System* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 56. Jackson-Preece goes on to note, however, that, although such provisions could be included as conditions of peace, the international law of the time did not 'sanction intervention by one prince in another's affairs solely on religious grounds.' *Ibid.*, 57.

⁵³ Hedley Bull et al, eds., *Hugo Grotius and International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 247.

⁵⁴ It is noteworthy, however, that Grotius' notion of *temperamenta belli* does not fall within his treatment of the law of nations. It seems to have been more of a moral exhortation than a legal principle. See G.I.A.D. Draper, 'Grotius' Place in the Development of Legal Ideas about War,' in Bull et al, *Grotius and International Relations*, 197-199.

⁵⁵ Emmerich de Vattel, *The Law of Nations or Principles of the Law of Nature Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns* (Philadelphia: T. and J.W. Johnson, 1883), Book 3, paras. 145, 147, 293 and 294. Available at: <http://www.constitution.org/vattel/vattel-03.htm>.

⁵⁶ Adam Roberts and Richard Guelff, eds., *Documents on the Laws of War*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3.

⁵⁷ See Robert Ergang, *Herder and the Foundations of German Nationalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), 239, 247, 252.

⁵⁸ Tom J. Farer and Felice Gaer, 'The UN and Human Rights,' in Adam Roberts and Benedict Kingsbury, eds., *United Nations, Divided World: The UN's Roles in International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 242.

⁵⁹ Jackson-Preece, *National Minorities*, 60-1.

⁶⁰ Henry Kissinger, *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace 1812-1822*, Sentry edition, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954), 288-9, 295. MacFarlane, *Intervention in Contemporary World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2005), 26-29.

⁶¹ Jennifer Jackson-Preece, *National Minorities*, 62.

⁶² For the text, see <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multi/texts/historical/LIEBER-CODE.txt>.

⁶³ Roberts and Guelff, *Documents on the Laws of War*, 12-13.

⁶⁴ For the background of this Convention, see Eric Myles, "'Humanity,'" "Civilisation" and the "International Community" in the Late Russian Imperial Mirror: Three Ideas

Topical for Our Days,' *Journal of the History of International Law* 4, (2002), 316-18. For the relevant St. Petersburg and The Hague agreements, see Roberts and Guelff, *Documents on the Laws of War*, 54-5, 60-1, 64-5. For background, see Don Hubert, *The Landmine Ban: A Case Study in Humanitarian Advocacy* (Providence, RI: The Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, 2000), 1-2.

⁶⁵ Farer and Gaer, 'The UN and Human Rights,' 243.

⁶⁶ Jackson-Preece, *National Minorities*, 68.

⁶⁷ For a useful account of the League's role in this area, see Louise Holborn, *Refugees, a Problem of Our Time: The Work of the UNHCR, 1951-1972*, Vol. 1, (Methuen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1975), 3-20.

⁶⁸ Gil Loescher, *Beyond Charity: International Cooperation and the Global Refugee Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 33.

⁶⁹ Fifty-six governments ratified the 1922 agreement on Russian refugees, eight ratified the 1933 successor convention on Russian refugees and three ratified a 1938 agreement on refugees from Germany and Austria.

⁷⁰ Robert Jackson, 'International Community beyond the Cold War,' in *Beyond Westphalia? State Sovereignty and International Intervention*, ed. Gene Lyons and Michael Mastanduno (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 78.

⁷¹ Simon Chesterman, 'Introduction: Global Norms, Local Contexts,' in Chesterman, *Civilians in War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 1.

Response to S. Neil McFarlane: Why Human Security Is a New Concept with Global Origins

RICHARD PONZIO

Human security is not a concern with weapons. It is a concern with human dignity. In the last analysis, it is a child who did not die, a disease that did not spread, an ethnic tension that did not explode, a dissident who was not silenced, a human spirit that was not crushed.

Mahbub ul Haq¹

During the past decade, the term 'human security' ushered in a new generation of thinking about security studies that extends beyond the traditional preoccupation with the military defence of state interests and territory. Besides spawning a global commission,² an annual report³ and rich academic debates,⁴ the concept has helped to shape important policy and institutional reform initiatives, such as the land-mine convention, International Criminal Court and small arms reduction, led by United Nations member states and civil society groups associated with a 'human security network'.⁵

In his essay 'The Pre-History of Human Security,' S. Neil MacFarlane argues that 'there is very little that is new in this effort to reconceptualise security.' He proceeds to offer an impressively thorough and persuasive overview of how the concept of human security is rooted in both Western political philosophy and the evolution of the nation-state. Acknowledging the disciplinary 'lens' through which the author derives his conclusions, I nevertheless submit that human security is, indeed, highly innovative and draws its influence from the context-specific nature of this modern, integrative and universal concept. Admittedly, all concepts are moulded from precursors or antecedents, but human security's wide international currency in a range of policy and academic fields today stems from its origins in, for example, Islam, Eastern thought and various indigenous traditions, and not solely in Occidental civilisation. This helps to explain why no less than forty-five National Human Development Reports have afforded attention to the concept, including in countries as diverse as Afghanistan (2004), Chile (1998), Moldova (1999) and Sierra Leone (1998), in addition to the forthcoming report on *Human Development in South Asia 2005*.⁶ It is unnecessary, inaccurate and debilitating to posit

R. Ponzio, 'Why Human Security is a New Concept with Global Origins', *STAIR* 1, No 2 (2005): 66-71.

an exclusively euro-centric origin to a concept the strength of which, in part, derives from its universality.

First, on the issue of 'newness' and innovation, the author narrowly approaches the concept through the discourse of international relations (IR), by which he defines human security in the second footnote as 'the protection of human beings from organised violence.' In doing so, he purposely avoids any discussion about the first popular usage of the term: in the 1994 *Global Human Development Report*. That is where the report's chief architect, Mahbub ul Haq, first articulated the concept of human security by setting out to redefine security in two basic ways:

1. from an exclusive stress on territorial security to a much greater stress on people's security and
2. from security through armaments to security through sustainable human development.⁷

In defining the concept, ul Haq argued that it 'means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life ...' Initially appealing to development actors concerned with capturing a 'peace dividend' after the Cold War, the concept soon garnered support from a broader global constituency of humanitarians, environmentalists and conflict prevention advocates in and outside of governments.

Since the concept's introduction some eleven years ago, it has served as a useful rallying cry to bind together a diverse coalition of 'middle power states,' development agencies, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with a common interest in shifting political attention and resources away from conventional security issues towards urgent people-centered priorities.⁹ Contrary to MacFarlane's contention that human security is simply a 'contemporary manifestation' of an old idea or set of ideas with a new label, the concept's unique contribution emanates from its relevance to post-Cold War issues—e.g., state failure, internally displaced persons, global terrorism, new technologies, etc.—that were of limited significance during past centuries encompassing the so-called 'pre-history of human security.' To a degree unprecedented in human history, governments—rather than solely political philosophers and concerned individuals—are as concerned today about people's safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression as they are about traditional forms of security. Even with the various political-security preoccupations associated with the war on terror, the world's richest nations have steadily increased aid and set new records in terms of aid forgiveness for the poorest nations.¹⁰ And, it is not accidental that a global consensus has begun to emerge around the 'responsibility to protect'¹¹

associated with multiple recent humanitarian interventions only *after* the forty-year East-West struggle subsided.

Granted, the wide scope of human security, as defined by ul Haq and others, reduces the concept's analytical value and utility for explaining human and state behavior with precision. Indeed, critics of the concept have argued that it is 'too broad and vague a concept to be meaningful ..., as it has come to entail such a wide range of different threats on one hand, while prescribing a diverse and sometimes incompatible set of policy solutions to resolve them on the other.'¹² But, narrow definitions of human security, derived from neo-realist and neo-liberal institutional schools of IR that are more consistent with MacFarlane's interpretation,¹³ also fail to explain causality in a strict positivist sense. Rather, many scholars of international relations and other social science disciplines value human security for its normative contribution as a unifying concept. By positing that 'human beings count,' human security helps scholars and practitioners balance the traditional preoccupation with the state as the main 'unit of analysis' with the urgent needs of people. In doing so, the concept introduces a missing ethical dimension in the study of international relations and related subjects. Moreover, setting legitimate concerns about the parameters of human security aside, a growing number of IR scholars recognise its importance in bridging the development and humanitarian analytical fields with the IR sub-field of security studies.

Second, whereas I not only disagree with the assumption that human security fails to offer a genuine alternative conceptual framework for new thinking in the social sciences, I also take issue with the author's over-reliance on Western political philosophy and historical processes as the purported engine culminating in what is, in my view, a genuinely holistic and globally inclusive notion. Beginning with the classical and medieval periods, MacFarlane traces the historical roots of the concept within the confines of Occidental civilisation. He provides a fascinating and lucid discussion that illuminates the profound influence of early Western writers on later thinking—during the early formation of the Westphalian state system to the more recent 'Age of Nationalism'—about security, sovereignty, power, authority, law, the conduct of war, the treatment of minorities and the rights and obligation of the state or polis vis-à-vis the citizen. Each of these notions serves as significant antecedents for today's human security discourse.

Far from denying, then, the contribution to human security's evolution provided by Western-oriented scholars and the rise of the modern nation-state initially in the West, I contend that the concept's origins are partly, if not equally, rooted in Islam, Eastern thought and a range of

indigenous traditions previously un-penetrated by Western thought and customs. From the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed, the Buddha and Confucius to the centuries-long struggles of indigenous groups, such as those culminating in the efforts led by Rigoberta Menchù and José Ramos-Horta, strong notions of social justice, communal responsibility, inter-generational equity and harmony with nature emerged to challenge—and sometimes change—Western-held beliefs. They further shaped international dialogues that preceded and informed the introduction of the modern concept of human security in the 1990s.

Although many Western IR writers are quick to criticise unwieldy, ambiguous definitions associated with the term human security, they are reluctant to acknowledge that its universal appeal stems precisely from its holistic character, inclusiveness and diverse origins with a global reach. It is no coincidence that the co-chairs for the recent Commission on Human Security are two prominent Asian intellectuals, Sadako Ogata from Japan and Amartya Sen from India. Rather than conforming to a definition more acceptable to Western mainstream IR scholars, Ogata and Sen simply built on Mahbub ul Haq's integrative concept by describing the objective of human security as safeguarding the 'vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment.'¹⁴ Unsurprisingly, non-Western groups such as the African Human Security Initiative (AHSI)¹⁵ are committed to a broad human security agenda that reflects their region's interdependent and complex socio-economic and political realities. For instance, the AHSI has identified the following six clusters from which to review their own perceived human security performance priorities: human rights, democracy and governance, civil society engagement, small arms and light weapons, peacekeeping and conflict resolution, anti-corruption and terrorism and organised crime. Similarly, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan adopts a comprehensive and integrated perspective on security by linking it closely with human rights and development in his March 2005 report *In Larger Freedom*.¹⁶

In 'The Pre-History of Human Security,' MacFarlane makes a valuable contribution to thinking on human security. At the same time, he demonstrates the large gap that remains between development economists who introduced this modern idea in the mid-1990s and IR scholars who contest the originality of the concept and question rightly its utility in the social sciences—as all important notions deserve careful, objective scrutiny among peer reviewers. More research and dialogue are required to bridge constructively the various disciplines engaged in thinking about human security and its relevance to understanding the modern world.

¹ Mahbub ul Haq, *Reflections on Human Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 116.

² Published in 2003, the Commission on Human Security's final report is titled *Human Security Now* and can be accessed at: <http://www.humansecurity-chs.org>.

³ Modeled on the annual *Human Development Report*, the Human Security Report maps the incidence, intensity, causes and consequences of global violence and policy responses to that violence. For further information, visit: <http://www.humansecuritycentre.org>.

⁴ For example, Roland Paris, 'Human Security: Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?', *International Security* 26, no. 2 (Fall 2001); Yuen Foong Khong, 'Human Security: A Shotgun Approach to Alleviating Human Misery?', *Global Governance* 7, no. 3 (July-September 2001); Jorge Nef, *Human Security and Mutual Vulnerability: The Global Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment*, 2nd ed., (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1999); and Tatsuro Matsumae and L.C. Chen, eds., *Common Security in Asia: New Concept of Human Security* (Tokyo: Tokai University Press, 1995).

⁵ According to its website, <http://www.humansecuritynetwork.org>, the Human Security Network is 'a group of like-minded countries from all regions of the world that, at the level of Foreign Ministers, maintains dialogue on questions pertaining to human security. The Network includes Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, Slovenia, Thailand and South Africa as an observer. The Network has a unique inter-regional and multiple agenda perspective with strong links to civil society and academia.'

⁶ Visit: <http://hdr.undp.org/reports>.

⁷ UNDP, *Human Development Report 1994*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 24.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁹ Paris, 'Paradigm Shift or Hot Air?', 88, 102.

¹⁰ One argument for why rich nations are increasing aid for poorer nations is the realisation, according to the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, that: 'Today, more than ever before, threats are inter-related and a threat to one is a threat to all. The mutual vulnerability of weak and strong has never been clearer.' United Nations, Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility*, New York, December 2004.

¹¹ For an overview of this concept, which stems directly from human security policy debates led by Canada, Norway and other states, see: International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, *The Responsibility to Protect* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, December 2001).

¹² Heather Owens and Barbara Arneil, 'The Human Security Paradigm Shift: A New Lens on Canadian Foreign Policy? Report of the University of British Columbia

Symposium on Human Security,' in *Worlds Apart: Human Security and Global Governance*, ed. Majid Tehranian (London: I.B. Tauris, 1999), 2.

¹³ For example, Kanti Bajpai proposes a 'human security audit' that would include narrowly focused measures of 'direct and indirect threats to individual bodily safety and freedom.' Kanti Bajpai, 'Human Security: Concept and Measurement,' Kroc Institute Occasional Paper no. 19 (August 2000). <http://www.nd.edu/fllkrocinst/ocpapers/op—19—1.PDF>.

¹⁴ United Nations, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People*, New York, 2003, 4. <http://www.humansecurity-chs.org>.

¹⁵ Inspired by the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the AHSI is a network of seven African nongovernmental research organisations that have come together to measure the performance of key African governments in promoting human security. For further details visit: <http://www.africanreview.org>.

¹⁶ United Nations, Secretary-General, *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*, New York, 21 March 2005. <http://www.un.org/largerfreedom>.

Who's Securing Whom? The Need for International Relations to Embrace Human Security

PETER HOUGH

Wide and narrow conceptions of security

Following the peaceful conclusion of the Cold War, many 'wideners' emerged in the Security Studies literature of the 1990s arguing that the subject now needed to embrace a more varied range of perceived threats to humankind, taking it well beyond the traditional focus on military threats emanating from other states. The apparent 'New World Order' seemed, to many statesmen, academics and members of the general public, to herald a new era of international politics. With the threat of global nuclear Armageddon diminished, previously marginalised issues could emerge from the shadow of superpower rivalry and register on the international political agenda. Ontological questions largely ignored by the realists, who dominated the study and practise of international relations (IR) between 1940 and 1990, began to be asked. Who is being secured? Who is doing the securing? What is it to be secure?

The origins of a widened academic approach, however, can be traced back to the height of the second Cold War in 1983, when Richard Ullman defined a threat to security as:

An action or sequence of events that (1) threatens drastically and over a relatively brief span of time to degrade the quality of life for the inhabitants of a state or (2) threatens significantly to narrow the range of policy choices available to a government of a state, or to private, non-governmental entities (persons, groups, corporations) within the state.¹

Such a broad interpretation of security found many critics amongst realists, who were not shaken by the end of the Cold War from their belief in maintaining a narrower focus on what constitutes security studies. Stephen Walt forcefully argued this case, stating, 'Security studies may be defined as the study of the threat, use and Walt and the traditionalists fear that widening the definition of security risks rendering the concept redundant by making it too all-encompassing and diluting the important task of analysing military threats and inter-state conflict. Underlying this

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fear, of course, is the belief of many realists that military threats are actually more apparent in a post-Cold War world devoid of that traditional guarantor of state security, the military balance of power. This 'anti-New World Order' thesis was epitomised by John Mearsheimer's lament, in 1990, that 'we will soon miss' the Cold War.³ Some traditionalists consider the demise of the Cold War to signal a need for security studies to go 'back to basics,' rather than broaden its base, since international politics shorn of the nuclear balance of power imposed by the two superpowers would find the need to rediscover lost arts of multi-lateral diplomacy, conflict resolution, fighting limited wars and conventional defence.

Although there is a case to be made that military threats in the twenty-first century are as apparent as ever—and maybe even greater than during the Cold War, the simple fact remains that they are not the only threats that face states, people and the world as a whole. Indeed, they never have been. Throughout history people have been killed by things other than weapons, and states have been weakened or destroyed by things other than military conflict. Ullman argued that the security implications for states of demographic pressures and resource depletion needed to be taken on board alongside the consideration of military threats from other states.⁴ Towards the end of the Cold War, this logic was continued in a seminal article by Jessica Matthews, who highlighted the need for states to give proper concern to the newly apparent threats posed by environmental problems such as ozone depletion and global warming.⁵

Post-Cold War optimism prompted the emergence of many other wideners in security studies literature in the 1990s. Mohammed Ayoob highlighted that internal, rather than external, threats were the principal security concern of most less developed countries (LDCs).⁶ Peter Peterson and James Sebenius made the same point with reference to that most developed and powerful state, the United States, positing that a crisis in education and a growing economic 'underclass' should be understood as security threats.⁷ Stephen Lynn-Jones and Sean Miller addressed the need to give attention to a range of previously neglected internal and external threats, such as virulent nationalism and the social impact of migration.⁸ Although viewed as unwelcome by traditionalists such as Walt and Mearsheimer, this widening of security did not, however, undermine the realist logic of conventional security studies—although Ullman can be seen as a forerunner of the later-to-crystallise deepening approach. The focus was still on the state system and seeing relationships between states governed by power. At this time, widening was simply a matter of extending the range of factors that affect state power beyond the confines of military and trade affairs.

An argument for a more profound widening of security than merely tacking on some non-military issues to the range of threats to states emerged through the 1990s in a new approach that came to be characterised as the Copenhagen School. Barry Buzan trail-blazed this approach in the early 1990s,⁹ but it fully crystallised later in the decade, when he teamed up with Ole Waever and Jaap De Wilde in producing the groundbreaking work *Security: A New Framework for Analysis*.¹⁰

Threats and vulnerabilities can arise in many different areas—military and non-military, but to count as security issues, they must meet strictly defined criteria that distinguish them from the normal run of the merely political. They must be staged as existential threats to a referent object by a securitising actor who thereby generates endorsement of emergency measures beyond rules that would otherwise bind.¹¹

This framework of analysis represented a significant shift from the traditionalist, ‘narrow’ conception of security as it not only brought non-military issues into focus, but also argued that issues can be considered matters of security even if they are not threatening states. A key influence on this was the largely unforeseen revival in nationalism in the post-Cold War landscape of Eastern Europe, particularly in Yugoslavia. The fact that conflict and the disintegration of a state occurred not as a result of external threats, but because of internal friction, prompted an attempt to incorporate sub-state groups into security analysis. A new concept of *societal security* sought to encapsulate the fact that the process of *securitising* issues could sometimes be witnessed when what is thought to be under threat is neither the state nor individuals within it, but rather a particular kind of society. Ole Waever et al state, ‘Societal security concerns the ability of a society to persist in its essential character under changing conditions and possible or actual threats’.¹² This security is threatened when ‘societies perceive a threat in identity terms’.¹³ Hence, the heightened political prominence given to the issue of immigration in many Western European countries in the 1990s could be construed as a securitising of that issue by nationals fearful of threats to their traditional values and customs.

The Deepening of Security

Going beyond the Copenhagen School in extending the domain of security studies is the ‘deepening’ approach, led by Pluralists and social constructivists and pioneered by Ullman. Deepeners embrace the concept of ‘human security’ and argue that the chief *referent object* of security should

not be the state or certain sub-state groups, such as stateless nations, but the individual people who comprise these institutions/groups. Richard Falk, for example, considers that security ought to be defined as 'the negation of insecurity as it is *specifically* experienced by individuals and groups in concrete situations.'¹⁴ This is a significant leap from widening, which, as Falk describes, 'still conceives of security largely from the heights of elite assessment, at best allowing the select advisor to deliver a more enlightened message to the ear of the prince.'¹⁵

The root of the problem with the traditional approaches to security politics is what Richard Wyn-Jones describes as the 'fetishisation of the state.'¹⁶ This tendency in IR is not resolved by the Copenhagen School approach, which accepts the idea that non-military issues can be securitised and that the referent object of this can be something other than a state, but maintains the logic that only the state can be the *securitising actor*—i.e., decide whether the issue is acted upon as a matter of urgency. Hence, state-centrism is maintained, if in a subtler form. The practical limitation with this is that not only are the traditional security agents of the state often inadequate for dealing with security problems affecting the people of that state, they are often a chief cause of those problems. Buzan accepts that states can be the source of threats, rather than protection for individual people, but considers that this is a property of only certain types of states. He argues that 'strong states' co-existing in 'mature anarchy,' which have increasingly become the norm through democratisation and the development of international human rights law, can be relied upon to secure individuals.¹⁷ Hence, Buzan and Waever are neo-realist wideners, albeit of a much more refined form than those who preceded them.

Embracing human security necessitates shifting the focus to the existential security of individuals, rather than considering how societies can be threatened. Issues such as the irritation caused by alien customs, increased competition for employment or welfare benefits may threaten many people's notions of their societies, but they are not, in themselves, life threatening. The fears of the traditionalists are given some credence, and the concept becomes too diluted, if cultural change is accommodated alongside matters of life and death. In addition, on an ontological level, social constructs make very awkward referent objects on which to base analysis. Bill McSweeney makes this point in challenging the approach of the Copenhagen School, arguing that societies, by definition, evolve, and individual identities change with them, making any enquiry into challenges to identity problematic.¹⁸ There may even be practical dangers inherent in this approach, since the arbiters of what society is and who is threatening it likely will be those with the loudest voices. Frequently,

such people will be ultra-nationalist elites seeking to justify the exclusion of minority 'others.' Wyn-Jones states, 'Despite his liberal sensibilities, Buzan's conceptualisation of security provides him with no theoretical grounds for disputing, say, Radovan Karadzic's claims that Bosnian Serb security depends on the creation of an ethnically pure territory.'¹⁹

Whilst the practical concern that widening the focus of security studies should not distract attention from military threats has some validity, the intellectual rationale for maintaining a narrower focus is weak. In a book taking a wider approach to security—though not as wide as the Copenhagen School, James Wirtz contends that, 'If the threat of force, the use of force or even the logistical or technical assistance that can be supplied by military units does little to respond to a given problem, it probably is best not to treat the specific issue as a security threat.'²⁰ He also scoffs at the idea that global warming is a security issue, stating, 'It is not exactly clear ... how military forces can help reduce the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.'²¹ This view gives an indication of how blinkered the mainstream study of security remains.

Defining an issue as one of security on the basis of whether it involves military forces strips the term of any real meaning. Security is a human condition. To define it purely in terms of state bodies, the aim of which is to help secure their state and people in a certain dimension, rather than in terms of the people whose security is at stake, is both odd and nonsensical. This way of framing what is and what is not a security issue is akin to saying that children being taught to read by their parents are not being educated, or that happiness does not exist unless it is induced by the performances of state-sponsored clowns. A security issue, surely, is an issue which threatens—or appears to threaten—ones security. Defining a security issue in behavioural terms, rather than excluding certain categories of threats because they do not fit conventional notions of what defines the subject area, gives the term some objective meaning. If people, be they government ministers or private individuals, perceive an issue to threaten their lives in some way and respond politically to this threat, then that issue should be deemed to be a security issue.

Hence, by adopting this framework, the notion of security is recast as a social construct stripping away the need for the analyst to speculate on what they think is the most threatening of the myriad issues on the contemporary international political agenda and concentrate instead on analysing how and why certain issues actually are perceived of as vital and responded to in an extraordinary way by decision-makers. This approach is appropriate because it can be demonstrated through opinion polls that people do think of their security in different terms today than they did during the Cold War (see Table 1). It is also observable, in vari-

ous ways, that the international political agenda has become far more diverse since 1990, with governments giving greater priority to issues such as environmental threats, narcotic drugs and public health. Even explicitly military organisations, like the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), are focussing increasingly on non-military activities, such as the disaster relief operations managed by the Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre.

Table 1(a): Fears of Individuals Living in the European Union in 2000²²

	Fear	%
1	Organised Crime	77%
2	Nuclear Power Plant Accident	75%
3	Terrorism	74%
4	Ethnic Conflict	65%
5	Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction	62%
6	Epidemics	57%
7	Accidental Launch of Nuclear Weapon	55%
8	World War	45%
9	Conventional War	45%
10	Nuclear Conflict	44%

Table 1(b): Single Biggest Fear for Africans²³

	Fear	%
1	Economic Insecurity ²⁴	37%
2	Disease ²⁵	21%
3	Corruption	7%
4	Illiteracy	6%
5	War	6%
6	Political Conflict	5%
7	Environmental Destruction	3%

Who's securing whom?

The preoccupation of security studies with the state is very much a relic of the Cold War. In some ways, this is understandable, because the discipline of IR, and its sub-discipline security studies, only emerged in the 1930s and was thus forged in an era of unprecedented military threats. Realism was in the ascendancy at the close of the Second World War, as the application of force had proved its worth in curbing aggression and restoring order in Europe and Asia. Pre-World War Two international cooperation, in the form of the League of Nations and the appeasement

of aggressors, comprehensively failed to keep the peace. In addition, the total war of World War Two and the 'total phoney war' of the Cold War, whereby whole populations were threatened by state quarrels in a way not seen before, bound individuals to the fates of their governments like never before.

Hence, in the 1940s, the twin concepts of 'national interest' and 'national security' took centre stage in IR and security studies. Walter Lippmann, an American journalist who popularised the term 'Cold War,' also defined the nature of security that would characterise that era. He wrote, 'A nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war.'²⁶ The U.S.'s new pre-eminence and preparedness to act on the world stage in 1945 was an additional key factor in promoting this approach. The U.S. government found itself in a position of unprecedented dominance and felt compelled to utilise its power in a way that it had shown little inclination to do in the past. Using the precursor 'national' in a government's political rhetoric is always a device to convince society to rally behind the government and garner legitimacy for a potentially controversial policy. The U.S. government was embarking on a radical new direction in its foreign policy and needed its society united and on board for the journey.²⁷ U.S. academic, and godfather of realism in the 1940s and 1950s, Hans Morgenthau summarised this new dynamic:

The nation state is to a higher degree than ever before the predominant source of the individual's moral and legal valuations and the ultimate point of reference for his secular loyalties. Consequently, its power among the other nations and the preservation of its sovereignty are the individual's foremost concerns in international affairs.²⁸

The scale of the threat posed by nuclear war in the second half of the twentieth century served to weld the security of individual people in the U.S.—and elsewhere—to that of their governments. The state would assume the responsibility for protecting its citizens and demand their loyalty, in return, in a strengthened version of the 'social contract' relationship articulated by political philosophers from the seventeenth century such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. Hobbes' advocacy of the need for the Leviathan—meaning a strong state, to save individuals from the dangerous anarchy that would otherwise result from the pursuit of their own selfish interests, was a major influence on Morgenthau and the realists. In the late twentieth century, the anarchy was the international state system and the dangers came, to a greater extent than ever before, from other states.

Hence, the realist approach to IR represented a revival of the understanding that the state was crucial to securing the lives of its citizens in

a different guise. In between Hobbes and Morgenthau, political philosophy and state governance in Europe and North America was influenced more by liberalism and a very different notion of security. Eighteenth century liberal philosophers were alarmed that the social contract had become unbalanced and that the leviathan was endangering, rather than protecting, its individuals. Thomas Paine, Charles de Montesquieu, John Stuart Mill and Adam Smith all referred to ‘security’ in their notable works, and Jeremy Bentham saw security and liberty as synonymous, declaring that, ‘without security, equality could not last a day.’²⁹ This ‘bottom up’ approach to security was revived in IR by social constructivists in the 1990s. Ken Booth, a converted realist security specialist, argues that ‘security and emancipation are in fact two sides of the same coin. It is emancipation, not power and order, in both theory and practise, that leads to stable security.’³⁰

McSweeney observes that, over time, security had come to be defined in IR solely as an adjective, rather than as a noun, or as ‘a commodity rather than a relationship.’³¹ The human part of a human condition had been lost, and the term had become synonymous with *realpolitik*, the interest of the state. Military might and the application of the ‘national interest’ can secure lives, but they can also, of course, imperil them. Additionally, human lives can be threatened by a range of issues other than military ones. A thorough application of security in the study of global politics must, surely, recognise this, or else admit that it is a more limited field of enquiry, such as, for example, ‘war studies’ or ‘strategic studies.’ The conceptualisation of IR, like the conduct of IR, was frozen in time between 1945 and 1990.

Table 2: Narrow, Wide and Deep Conceptions of Security

	Types of Issues		
	Military	Non-Military	
Referent Object of Security		Using Military Means	Unsolvable by Military
State	Narrow	Wide	
Non-State Actor			Copenhagen School
Individual			Human Security

Designating an issue as a matter of security is not just an arcane matter of academic semantics. 'Securitisation' carries 'real world' significance in how issues are ordered on the political agenda, since the security of its state must be a priority for a government, and threats to the lives of people are increasingly accepted as more important than other matters of contention. However, despite some widening to bring non-military issues like disease pandemics and the narcotics trade into the 'national security' framework, governments do still tend to be realist in their foreign policies, and the traditional discrimination between 'high-politics' and 'low politics' is still evident in the level of state expenditure typically allocated to the achievement of military security, as opposed to other issue areas.

The government of South Africa trebled its allocation of state funding for fighting AIDS for 2002-2003 to \$1 billion. This was a significant response by the government to criticism that they had not done enough to tackle this massive threat to South African life. However, the increased expenditure needs to be set in context. For the same financial year, the slice of the budget set aside for military defence was \$21 billion. However, there seems little doubt that few South African citizens would consider the prospect of armed invasion from Mozambique, Zimbabwe or any other state more of a threat to their lives than AIDS. Around 5 million people in South Africa (11 percent of the population) are infected with HIV, and AIDS is the country's biggest killer, causing an estimated 40 percent of all deaths in 2002.³² In comparison, South Africa has no obvious external military threat. Straight comparisons between government expenditure on different areas are problematic, as different policy goals cost different amounts of money. Similarly, one could posit that South Africa's lack of military adversaries is a measure of the success of its defence policy. Even if this were to be accepted, however, the threat of AIDS remains acute in South Africa, and there is little doubt that more could be done to alleviate the problem. The government of poorer Uganda, for instance, cut HIV prevalence by half in the late 1990s through a concerted public information campaign notably lacking in South Africa, where the Thabo Mbeki government, driven by a desire to limit damage to national prestige rather than its to its citizens, has favoured a policy of denial.

South Africa is by no means unusual in such a disparity of priorities and, indeed, has done more than most countries to reduce a preoccupation with military defence—if you bear in mind that, in the early 1990s,

it became the only state in history to unilaterally disarm itself of nuclear weapons. The proportion of South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) spent on military defence is 1.5 percent, and the overall proportion spent on health is 3.3 percent.³³ This is more or less in line with most governments not involved in major military operations. Military threats, of course, are more apparent to some countries than to others, and so global figures give a better insight into the balance between health and defence expenditures. The scale of threats to the world as a whole is quantifiable and, as a result, the mis-prioritising of expenditure becomes obvious. World military expenditure accounts for 2.6 percent of global GDP,³⁴ whilst world health expenditure makes up 8 percent of global GDP.³⁵ Over one third of the world's health expenditure is private and, therefore, cannot be considered government prioritisation of health—except in so far as it is considered an alternative to public health. Overall, then, governments allocate approximately twice as much spending to health as to military security. Consider this in relation to the relative threat to people's lives posed by military and health threats (see Table 3).

*Table 3: Causes of Death in the World in 2001*³⁶

Cause of Death	%
Disease	91%
Miscellaneous Accidents	4.1%
Road Traffic Accidents	2.1%
Suicide	1.5%
Homicide	0.9%
'Collective Violence'	0.4%
Natural Disasters	0.05%

In considering the figures in Table 3, a few qualifications need to be taken into account. It is entirely natural to die of ill-health, since we all die in the end and 'old age' or 'natural causes' make up a proportion of the deaths by 'disease.' However, 32.5 percent of all deaths are from communicable diseases, which cannot be thought inevitable, and many of the people who die from non-communicable diseases die 'prematurely' from diseases like cancer, which are, at least partially, preventable. Additionally, 'disease' incorporates deaths from malnutrition, which most certainly are politically avoidable. Also, while some accidents may be unavoidable and, to a certain extent, 'natural,' this is, in fact, a pretty small proportion even for 'natural disasters.'

'Collective violence' subsumes wars and all 'organised' killings, including international war, civil war, political massacres (e.g., genocide), non-state violence (terrorism) and gang crime. Of these categories, international war is by far the smallest cause of fatalities. That the issue most associated with IR is a comparatively minor threat to most people in the world is an indication of how the study of security in the discipline has become skewed over time. The threat posed to the average citizen of the world by military action emanating from another state is dwarfed by threats that are closer to home and are more familiar. This is exemplified by the fact that more people kill themselves each year than are killed by both homicide and collective violence combined.

Security wideners, including some realists, accept that non-military issues can become 'securitised' and, hence, be privileged with 'national security' status. The issues securitised in this way, however, are arbitrarily defined. The tendency has been, on the one hand, to select non-military issues that military forces can help with, such as fighting drugs barons abroad or assisting in civil emergency operations. On the other hand, 'securitisation' sometimes has been granted to external non-military problems on the basis that they have domestic military repercussions. Issues such as AIDS or environmental degradation in distant countries may destabilise regional balances of power and trigger military conflict into which the on-looking government may be drawn or be affected in some capacity. Hence, with widening, the logic of national interest and prioritising high politics is not really challenged. It is more of a refinement of the way in which external threats are calculated and a case of allowing 'low politics' to rise to prominence in the absence of major 'high politics' threats. Military defence is still prioritised, and security still defined as a very specific noun, rather than as an adjective.

The Copenhagen School approach takes a step forward from 'conventional widening' in using the methodology of the 'speech act' to define when an issue becomes a security issue. In this approach, security issues can be military or non-military but are distinguishable by the urgency attached to them in political discourse. Buzan, Waever and De Wilde write, 'If by means of an argument about the priority and urgency of an existential threat the securitising actor has managed to break free of procedures or rules he or she would otherwise be bound by, we are witnessing an act of securitisation.'³⁷ This methodology allows for a more behavioural definition of security than 'conventional widening,' because issues given priority by people other than the government are included in the framework. However, this approach still leaves the act of securing threatened people to the state. This can result in the exclusion of life-threatening issues from consideration because the government still

chooses not to prioritise them, or because the voices speaking for securitisation are insufficiently loud. Security threats specific to women, for example, tend to be marginalised because of difficulties in 'being heard' amongst the 'speakers of security' in society. Non-military issues are more easily accommodated by the speech act approach, but there is still a large measure of subjectivity and relativism in leaving the demarcation to governments, rather than to objective analysis.

Conclusion

Security *is* subjective, in that individual fears do not necessarily tally with the reality of threats, but this is a better guide to the issues that matter than to the priorities of governments. The security of governments does not equate with the security of the people they are meant to represent. This is evident in the development of global human rights policy and in the existence of global systemic failings such as the widespread persistence of hunger and treatable diseases in a world with sufficient food and medicine to counter them.

If politics is about the 'authoritative allocation of values',³⁸ issues arise as a result of contention over certain values. In IR, the traditional assumption is that the core value is the preservation of state sovereignty, and that this automatically commands pride of place at the top of the domestic and international political agendas. However, it has become increasingly evident over the years that values other than this are becoming prioritised, and that the pursuit of state security can often undermine human security. Political issues are myriad, but ultimately can be distilled to contention over the allocation of certain core values, such as security, economic gain and altruism.

It is perfectly natural to give priority to security over the other values because it is a precondition for realising their allocation. If security is considered from the perspective of individual people, however, issues are less easily compartmentalised. Most issues of state altruism, such as the granting of foreign aid, are matters of life and death to the people affected. Many issues of state economic gain, such as altering the terms of international trade, are security matters for people in other states affected by the change. The blinkered pursuit of profit can enrich some but imperil others. State altruism exists in the world, as do some limitations to the pursuit of economic gain, but not at the same prominence as in the domestic politics of states in which individual people are empowered with votes and /or rights of citizenship. Individual security is recognised

in developed, democratic states as overriding other values—at least most of the time—as is evidenced by health and safety laws restricting business activities and ‘social security’ laws. In global politics, however, issues of life and death frequently are not treated as priorities because they do not coincide with state gain or security.

As was the case in pre-Welfarian Europe, if saving others from abuse or disaster is seen as an act of charity, rather than political duty, it will only happen infrequently and selectively. The December 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean prompted an impressive global relief operation, but also demonstrated how unnecessarily insecure large swathes of humanity are in the world today. Global governance, driven by human security rather than sporadic bouts of human compassion, could have saved most of the tsunami victims—specifically through the implementation of an early warning system of the kind operated in the wealthier Pacific rim and, more generally, through the appreciation of the way in which vulnerability turns natural hazards into human tragedies. Additionally, the very fact that such a calamitous tragedy would not register on the ‘seismographs’ of narrow—and some wider—security scholars serves as a reminder of the irrelevance of such an approach to the discipline. Actual threats to people (see Table 3) and perceived threats (see table 1) are so far removed from the way in which states conventionally order issues on the political agenda, that IR theory and international political practise needs to find ways of accommodating them, or else cease to be connected in any meaningful way with human behaviour and needs.

Human rights policies have developed significantly in recent decades, but this has not yet come close to securing *all* humans. Governments tend to prioritise the rights and lesser interests of their own citizens over the fundamental rights of others, and human rights still are treated routinely as secondary to ‘national security’ issues in cases in which the two are perceived to clash. The tightening of migration laws and the increased surveillance of foreign citizens in the present war against terror in the U.S and Western Europe represent cases in point. The lives of far more people in today’s world, however, are imperilled by human rights abuses than by terrorist and conventional military attacks. Throughout the total war era of the twentieth century, a case could be made that the security of individuals was inextricably tied to that of their state’s, but that era has now passed into history. Today, the issues that threaten people’s lives bear such little relation to those issues that dominate the international political agenda that state-centrism is impeding both the study and the practise of that most fundamental of political concerns: securing people.

- ¹ Richard Ullman, 'Redefining Security,' *International Security* 8, no. 1 (1983): 129-153, 133.
- ² Stephen Walt, 'The Renaissance of Security Studies,' *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (1991): 211-239, 212.
- ³ John Mearsheimer, 'Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War,' *The Atlantic Monthly* 226, no. 2 (1990): 35-50.
- ⁴ Ullman, 'Redefining Security.'
- ⁵ Jessica Mathews, 'Redefining Security,' *Foreign Affairs* 68, no. 2 (1989): 162-177.
- ⁶ Mohammed Ayoob, 'Defining Security: A Subaltern Realist Perspective,' in *Critical Security Studies*, ed. Keith Krause and Michael Williams (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 121-146.
- ⁷ Peter Peterson and James Sebenius, 'The Primacy of the Domestic Agenda,' in *Rethinking America's Security: Beyond Cold War to New World Order*, ed. Graham Allison and Gregory Treverton, (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1992), 57-93.
- ⁸ Stephen Lynn-Jones and Sean Miller, *Global Dangers: Changing Dimensions of International Security* (Cambridge, MA: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1995).
- ⁹ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fears: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, 2nd ed., (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991).
- ¹⁰ Barry Buzan, Ole Waever, and Jaap de Wilde, *Security. A New Framework for Analysis* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1998).
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5.
- ¹² Ole Waever et al, eds., *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993), 23
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Richard Falk, *On Humane Governance. Toward a New Global Politics* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), 147.
- ¹⁵ Falk, *On Humane Governance*, 146.
- ¹⁶ Richard Wyn-Jones, *Security, Strategy and Critical Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999), chapt. 4. [Http://www.ciaonet.org/book/wynjones/wynjones04.html](http://www.ciaonet.org/book/wynjones/wynjones04.html).
- ¹⁷ Buzan, *People, States and Fears*, 98-III.
- ¹⁸ Bill McSweeney, 'Identity and Security: Buzan and the Copenhagen School,' *Review of International Studies* 22, no. 1 (1996): 81-93.
- ¹⁹ Wyn-Jones, *Security*.

²⁰ James Wirtz, 'A New Agenda for Security and Strategy?', in *Strategy in the Contemporary World. An Introduction to Strategic Studies*, ed. John Baylis et al (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 309-327, 312.

²¹ Wirtz 'A New Agenda,' 311.

²² 15,900 people across the fifteen E.U. member states in November and December 2000 were asked the following question: 'Here is a list of things that some people are afraid of. For each of these, please tell me if, personally, you are afraid of it or not.' Phillipe Manigart, 'Public Opinion and European Defense,' *Special Eurobarometer* 146 (2001).

²³ BBC World Service poll of 7,671 people from Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Malawi, Zambia, Rwanda and the Ivory Coast. BBC World Service, Pulse of Africa, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/ol/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/18-10-04-pulse.pdf>.

²⁴ The category of 'economic insecurity' conflated the poll's categories of 'poverty' (24%), 'unemployment' (10%) and 'poor economic development' (3%).

²⁵ This category combined the categories of 'HIV/AIDS' (14%) and 'poor health' (7%).

²⁶ Walter Lippmann, *u.s. Foreign Policy*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1943), 32

²⁷ Bill McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests. A Sociology of ir* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 20-21.

²⁸ Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 5th ed., (New York: A. Knopf, 1972), 32.

²⁹ Jeremy Bentham, *The Theory of Legislation*, trans. R. Hildreth from Etienne Dumont, (London: Trubner and Co., 1876).

³⁰ Ken Booth, 'Security in Anarchy: Utopian Realism in Theory and Practise,' *International Affairs* 67, no. 3 (1991): 527-545, 539.

³¹ McSweeney, *Security, Identity and Interests*, 15.

³² Rob Dorrington, Debbie Bradshaw and Debbie Budlender, *HIV/AIDS Profile in the Provinces of South Africa - Indicators for 2002* (Cape Town: Centre for Actuarial Research, University of Cape Town, 2002).

³³ UNDP, *Human Development Report. Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

³⁴ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 'Military Expenditure,' in *SIPRI Yearbook 2002*, ed. SIPRI, Stockholm, 2002. [Http://editors.sipri.se/pubs/yb02/ch06.html](http://editors.sipri.se/pubs/yb02/ch06.html).

³⁵ World Health Organisation, *World Health Report 2002* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 2002).

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Buzan, Waever and De Wilde, *Security*, 25.

Four Questions about Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism

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DAVID TURTON

Following the violent overthrow of Mengistu Haile Mariam's government (usually known as the 'Derg'), in 1991, a transformation has taken place in the political structure of Ethiopia that has been both radical and pioneering. It has been radical because it has introduced the principle of self-determination for federated regional units in a formerly highly centralised and unitary state. It has been pioneering because Ethiopia has gone further than any other African state, and probably further than any state worldwide,¹ in using ethnicity as its fundamental organising principle. The new system was formally set in place in 1995 with the promulgation of Ethiopia's fourth constitution since 1931,² in which the country was re-designated the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE).

One might have expected that the radical and pioneering nature of Ethiopia's experiment in ethnic federalism would have made it highly relevant to the worldwide debates about the accommodation of ethnic diversity in democratic nation-states and about 'democratic nation-building' in the aftermath of internal war. It is an interesting and surprising fact, therefore, that the discussion of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia takes place almost entirely in an Ethiopian context—amongst Ethiopians themselves and amongst professional Ethiopia-watchers.³ This is unfortunate for two reasons. First, it has meant that our understanding of the Ethiopian case, and of the challenges facing Ethiopian federalism in the coming years, is restricted by the relative absence of direct comparison with other cases. Second, it has meant that the Ethiopian experience has had little chance to inform general thinking about the potential role of ethnic-based federalism in reconciling ethnic diversity with common citizenship in democratic, multiethnic nation-states. In this short article, I provide brief answers to four key questions about the Ethiopian experience of ethnic federalism since 1991, in the hope that this will illuminate the wider relevance of the Ethiopian case to the management of ethnic diversity and democratic nation-building elsewhere in the world, but particularly in Africa.⁴

Ethnic federalism is a form of power sharing within a nation-state in which ethnically based regional sub-units are accorded a high degree of territorial autonomy. This can only work, of course, when ethnic groups are more or less territorially concentrated, so that the boundaries of sub-units can be drawn in such a way that each group, although a minority in the country as a whole, forms a local majority in at least one of the sub-units. There are, of course, bound to be many 'untidy' facts for any system that expects to find a neat convergence between ethnic identity and the territorial distribution of groups, but these we may pass over for the moment.

It is important, however, particularly with Ethiopia in mind, to be clear about the difference between federalism and devolution. In a federal system, power is ideally devolved from the regions to the centre, rather than the other way around, resulting in a division of power between centre and regions in which the two levels of government are 'coordinate but independent.'⁵ In accordance with this theory, the constitution of the Ethiopian federation begins, 'We, the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia...', thereby suggesting that the constitution is the result of a power-sharing bargain, freely entered into by a group of previously independent sovereign entities. This is manifestly an historical fiction, since the sub-units that now constitute the FDRE had no prior, independent existence: the federation was formed by the devolution of power from the centre to ethno-territorial units carved out of a previously centralised and unitary state. But, we should be neither surprised nor scandalised to discover that the Ethiopian constitution, like the constitution of that classic exemplar of federalism, the United States, functions, to some extent, as a myth of origin. As we shall see later, a more important reason for doubting whether Ethiopia's ethnic federalism can yet be regarded as 'genuinely' federal is the continuing failure of the ruling party that introduced it to break away from the traditional Ethiopian conception of governance as the implementation of centrally conceived policies throughout the length and breadth of the country.

The older 'classic' federations, with the partial exceptions perhaps of Canada and Switzerland, were designed more to meet administrative and bureaucratic needs than to accommodate ethno-territorial pluralism within the framework of a single state. It was the Leninist model of federalism, however, that most clearly influenced the framers of the constitution of the FDRE. The Leninist model was designed, from the start, to provide a degree of autonomy and self-determination for minority

groups of the former Russian Empire, including the right of these groups to secede from the Soviet federation itself, a right that is also provided for in the Ethiopian constitution.

The analogy with the Leninist model is hardly auspicious for Ethiopia, given the sudden and dramatic collapse of its principal exemplars, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. But it would be wrong, on this account, to rule out federalism as a means of managing ethnic diversity in Ethiopia. In the first place, there seems to be widespread agreement in Ethiopia itself that there is no alternative to federalism—in some form—as a means of maintaining, intact, a multiethnic Ethiopia. In the second place, the use of territorial decentralisation as a means of accommodating ethnic claims, whether in the form of fully-fledged federalism or in the quasi-federal form of devolution, has been growing in popularity in recent years in the West.⁶ It has not however, been popular in Africa, which raises the question: Why Ethiopia?

Why Ethiopia?

We must first account for the general unpopularity of ethnic federalism in Africa. According to Will Kymlicka, there are two main factors which distinguish African states from those Western ones in which some form of ethnic (or, as he prefers to call it, 'multination') federalism has proved to be both popular and successful.⁷ First, since Western states no longer have neighbouring enemies, there is no fear amongst their ruling elites that national minorities will collaborate with would-be aggressors in their own region. Second, because of the widespread Western consensus on liberal democratic values, cutting across ethnic divisions, there also is no fear that national minorities will use their powers of self-government to persecute or expel members of other groups who happen to live on their territories. In the absence of both of these threats, Western states have been able to use multination federalism to contain the potentially destructive power of nationalism within the bounds of democratic politics, while promoting individual rights, economic prosperity and equality between groups. Perhaps we can go so far as to say that, while 'nation-building' in the West has also required 'nation-destroying',⁸ the survival of Western states, within the territorial boundaries established during this process of nation-building, has required the institutional rehabilitation and accommodation of 'sub-national' identities. At first sight, this explanation makes the enthusiastic embrace of ethnic federalism by Ethiopia even more difficult to comprehend, as neither of the fac-

tors mentioned may be said to distinguish Ethiopia from other African countries. But, if we look at the contrast in patterns of nation-building between Western and African states, we can see that Ethiopia may be the exception that proves the rule.

Nation-building in the West typically involved the imposition of a majority group's language and culture on the rest of the population. This led to struggles by minority nationalist groups to satisfy their aspirations for autonomy and self-government, aspirations which were often accommodated, in due course, by some form of ethnic-based federalism or ethno-territorial devolution. Nation-building in Africa, on the other hand, has typically been based, not on the language and culture of a dominant sub-national group, but on the spread of the colonial language and the attempted creation of a pan-ethnic national identity. This has not prevented conflict and competition from being defined along ethnic lines, but the object of such competition has been access to state resources at the centre, rather than regional autonomy. Ethiopia, which owes its existence not to European colonialism, but to what Kymlicka calls 'Western-style dominant group nation-building' by an 'ethno-national' group (the Shewan-Amhara), is an obvious exception to this rule.⁹ It is not surprising, therefore, that some Ethiopian minorities responded to Amhara domination by seeking autonomy and even secession. Nor is it surprising that ethnic federalism was chosen as a way of attempting to accommodate different sub-national identities within a national, Ethiopian identity.

There was, however, a big difference in the way in which ethnic-based regional autonomy was introduced in Ethiopia in the 1990s, and the way in which it was introduced in the West. In the West, it was the result of a gradual, piecemeal and often grudging process of recognising and accommodating the nationalist sentiments, and aspirations for self-government, of sub-state groups. In Ethiopia, it provided the fundamental legitimising principle of a new constitution, the purpose of which was to re-structure, or 're-map'¹⁰ the entire country after a protracted and bloody civil war. To oversimplify, national minorities in the West 'achieved' regional autonomy, while, in Ethiopia, they had it 'thrust upon' them. This leads us to consider the assumptions and motivations of the major political actors responsible for the design and implementation of federalism in Ethiopia, namely the leaders of the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which has been in power since the overthrow of the Derg in 1991. The EPRDF is a coalition of ethnic-based parties that was put together by, and remains largely under the sway of, the Tigrayan Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF), which, together with the Eritrean Peoples' Liberation Front (EPLF), was re-

sponsible for the military defeat of the Derg. There are three main points to be made here.

First, the success of the TPLF in its fight against Mengistu was based on mobilising its supporters behind the ideology of Tigrayan nationalism. Tigray, as Christopher Clapham has pointed out, 'occupies an anomalous position among the larger Ethiopian nationalities in being socially far more homogeneous than most areas of the country ... with by far the greatest number of its people sharing a single language and religion.'¹¹ It was to be expected, therefore, that the EPRDF, dominated as it is by the Tigrayan political elite, should draw on the experience of Tigray in seeing Ethiopia as 'an assemblage of distinct ethnicities'¹² and in concluding that the future stability and territorial integrity of the country depended on granting these ethnicities regional autonomy. The second, equally predictable but somewhat contradictory, point is that the TPLF leadership was no less imbued than its predecessors with the ideology of central, 'hegemonic' control that has been the dominant conceptualisation of governance in Ethiopia since the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Third, these leaders already had at hand the ideal doctrine for bringing together their two contradictory projects of regional autonomy and central control into a seemingly coherent political programme. This was the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of national self-determination, including the right of secession, which had been part of their political baggage since their days as student activists in the Ethiopian Students Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. In the case of the Soviet federation, the principle of national self-determination was meant as 'a temporary concession to what was regarded as a passing force of nationalism,' but 'its implementation and practice were fraught with contradictions,' which 'ultimately were the undoing of the federation'.¹³ The key question for the future of the Ethiopian federation is whether it can avoid the same fate or, as Clapham puts it, whether it can escape from the shadow 'cast by the model on which it was largely based'.¹⁴ Before considering this question, we need to ask to what extent the 're-mapping' of Ethiopia undertaken by the EPRDF since 1991 has been a success.

Has it succeeded?

When one considers the level of internal conflict, military violence and repression by agencies of the state that characterised the period of the Derg, the restructuring of Ethiopia as an ethnic-based federation has

been an undeniable success. It has provided peace and security for the great majority of the population following a violent civil war and laid down, for the first time in the history of Ethiopia, 'the legal foundation for a fully fledged democracy.'¹⁵ But if one considers the success of federalism in Ethiopia not against the record of the previous regime, but against the essential requirements of a genuinely federal division of powers, one cannot but entertain fears for its long-term future. The crux of the matter lies in the contradiction between constitutional theory and political practice.

As an attempt to reach a political compromise between the opposing values of unity and diversity, federalism is an idea built on a contradiction. There is bound to be tension, in any federal system, between these opposing values. The way in which different federal constitutions attempt, formally, to deal with this tension will vary—some have more of a 'unitary bias' than others, and some give greater autonomy to the regional states and, therefore, are more 'federal' than others. Clearly, there is no 'correct' solution: what matters is what works, which means getting the balance right for that particular federation. From this point of view, the important question for Ethiopia is whether the EPRDF's conceptualisation of the country as a union of sovereign 'Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' has resulted in a political settlement and institutional framework that is capable of accommodating diversity and containing conflict over the long term. On this question, according to Assefa Fisseha, Ethiopia 'appears to stand at a crossroads.'¹⁶

There is no doubt that the constitution of the FDRE is a genuinely, even radically, federal one. Compared to the strongly centralised regimes of the Haile Selassie and, especially, the Derg periods, the 1995 constitution represents a drastic diminution of the powers of central government and a corresponding enhancement of the powers of regional states. Indeed, according to Assefa, the constitution gives so many powers formally to states, that it comes close to satisfying the requirements of a confederation—that is, a system in which the powers of the central government are subordinate to the powers of the component state governments. But, if we compare constitutional theory with political practice, we immediately face a paradox. Despite the strong powers of self-determination that the constitution grants to regional states, including the right to secede from the federation, regional governments are dependent on the federal government to carry out almost all of their activities. According to Assefa, the explanation for this lies in political practice rather than in constitutional theory—particularly in the centralised party structure put in place by the EPRDF since 1991.

The EPRDF has four member parties,¹⁷ which govern, between them, the Oromo Regional State, the Amhara Regional State, the Southern Nations' Nationalities' and Peoples' Regional State (SNNPRS) and the Tigray Regional State. The five other states are governed by affiliate parties¹⁸ of the EPRDF, parties that the EPRDF has itself been instrumental in creating. The result of this party structure, known in the jargon of Soviet federalism as 'democratic centralism',¹⁹ is that regional governments are, in practice, implementers of policies adopted by the EPRDF. This blurring of party and state carries with it a threat that could, in the long run, undermine the whole federal system, since it negates the federal principle of the division of powers.

It is the essence of a federal division of powers to give political expression to, and thereby accommodate, conflicts of interest between the centre and the states and between the states themselves. The real test of the success of the Ethiopian experiment in ethnic federalism, then, has yet to come, given the continuing and overwhelming dominance of the ruling EPRDF at both federal and state levels. There is simply no way of knowing what the outcome will be of an opposition party gaining control of the centre and/or of one or more states, but there must be a real fear that the following sentences, written about the collapse of the Soviet Union, could be prophetic for the Ethiopian federation.

The fundamental incongruity between centralised party rule and the logic of ethnic federalism was held in check so long as the party was able to maintain its control and a measure of legitimacy. While economic failure was undoubtedly a key factor in the collapse of these communist regimes, it was ethnicity, treated in such ambivalent and contradictory ways by the party, which in the end provided a framework for their collapse by offering alternative basis and modes of organisation. Here was a true Marxian dialectic, for in the absence of more open ended politics, the real conflicts were perceived to be those between the centre as represented by the party and ethnic communities which had been provided a 'homeland' by it, for which federation was no longer a solution, but separatism (Ghai, 1998, p. 41).

If Ethiopia is to avoid such an outcome, it will be necessary to strengthen not only the practical, or operational, autonomy of states, but also the institutional mechanisms that could hold them together in the absence of the political 'glue' provided at present by the dominance of the EPRDF.

Can it survive?

I have, in a sense, already answered this: only time will tell. But, we can use the Ethiopian experience to consider a more theoretical

question, namely, can a federal system that gives ethnicity such overwhelming importance, making it the principle of political organisation and resource distribution, also hope to accommodate ethnic diversity and minimise ethnic conflict? Will not such a system inevitably stoke, rather than dampen, the fires of ethnic conflict, given the 'situational' and 'imagined' nature of ethnicity, which makes it such a powerful and manipulable resource in the hands of ambitious political leaders and ethnic elites? Evidence for such a view may be found in the history of Nigerian federalism, a major achievement of which, according to Rotimi Suberu,²⁰ has been to fragment the major ethnic groups by dispersing them amongst different administrative units. There are also plenty of grounds for scepticism concerning the root and branch restructuring of political life along ethnic lines that has taken place in Ethiopia since 1991.

In the first place, there is a mismatch between the constitutionally sanctioned view of ethnic groups as territorially bounded and the population mobility, accompanied by inter-group marriage, which has been a feature of life in the Horn—and in Africa generally—for thousands of years. This mobility, and the consequent mixing of populations, has been accelerating in Ethiopia in recent years, because of drought and famine; because of the general need of individuals and families to find better opportunities for economic survival; because of the resettlement policies of the previous and present governments; and because of the growth of ethnically heterogeneous urban centres. The federal 're-mapping' of Ethiopia along ethnic lines, by imposing a fixed ethno-territorial grid on populations with a long history of mobility and internal migration, has led, in some cases, to an increase rather than decrease in inter-ethnic tensions. One example of this is the boundary disputes that have arisen from attempts to demarcate long-contested ownership rights over land and water resources between different groups lying on either side of a regional state boundary. Another example is the conflicts that have arisen in the Southern Regional State over the definition of ethnic-based zones by local elites eager to use their 'ownership' of such zones to gain access to federal and state resources.²¹ And, a third example is the emergence of 'local tyrannies,' whether by the majority 'owners' of a 'mother state' against minorities of a different ethnicity, or by an ethnic minority in a multiethnic state.

In the second place, the Ethiopian constitution, as noted earlier, presents itself as the result of a bargain, freely entered into by the 'Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia.' But, nowhere does it tell us how to distinguish between these entities. Instead, we must make do with a vague, blanket definition that covers all three:

A 'Nation, Nationality or People' for the purpose of this Constitution, is a group of people who have or share a large measure of a common culture or similar customs, mutual intelligibility of language, belief in a common or related identities, a common psychological make-up, and who inhabit an identifiable, predominantly contiguous territory.²²

Why then, do we need these three different terms? One reason could be that they accomplish the important task of bringing constitutional theory into apparent conformity with a highly 'awkward' reality. The theory states that Ethiopia is a country of culturally and linguistically homogeneous and territorially contiguous 'regional states,' each with the right to self determination as a distinct 'nation.' The reality is that there are around 80 ethno-territorial groups in Ethiopia, varying enormously in size, all of which satisfy the above definition, none of which have clear-cut territorial and linguistic boundaries, and only six of which (Amhara, Oromo, Tigrayans, Harari, Afar and Somali) have 'mother states' named after them. These groups, especially the Amhara, Oromo and Tigrayans, are commonly referred to as 'nations.' None of these states is culturally and linguistically homogeneous, although, as already noted, the Tigray regional state is usually considered closest to this 'ideal.' The remaining three states are made up of a mixture of small, sometimes tiny, ethnic groups, none of which constitute an overall majority of the state's population or are considered large enough to form their own regional state. Normally, these are referred to as 'nationalities,' or 'peoples.'

Because the constitution provides no standard criteria for distinguishing between nations, nationalities and peoples, these terms can be used, as required, to talk about 'ethnic groups,' with populations ranging from a few thousand to several million, as though they were of the same order. It also means that the ideology of ethno-national self-determination can be appropriated, even by the smallest groups, in the struggle to obtain a bigger share of state and national resources. This helps to explain why the implementation of ethnic federalism in the multiethnic western and southern regions of Ethiopia has produced some of the worst inter-ethnic violence seen in the country since the toppling of the former regime. In Gambella Regional State, for example, the competition between by far the two largest local ethnic groups, the Nuer and the Anywaa, to gain 'ownership' of the regional state has dominated the struggle.²³ In the Southern Regional State, it has been dominated by the struggle of ethnic elites to have separate ethnic-based zones created, over which they can claim ownership for their own groups and thereby benefit more effectively from the allocation of federal and state resources. These examples give ample evidence that Ethiopia's ethnic federalism leaves much to be desired in its fulfilment of the two essential functions

of a federal system: the accommodation of diversity and the sharing of power and resources. The Ethiopian federal system has managed to contain the violence that, under the Derg, threatened to lead to the violent break-up of the country, but at the cost of adding a new ethnic dimension to conflicts that previously were expressed in less inflammatory, and therefore more manageable, ways.

Before we conclude that federalism is simply not an appropriate means of attempting to accommodate ethnic diversity, we should look again at the manner in which the devolution of power to ethno-territorial units was attempted in Ethiopia. We return here to the paradox of a system that, on the one hand, was intended to recognise and accommodate the different self-identities of groups, but that also sought not only to define, but also to impose, those identities from the outside according to supposedly objective criteria.²⁴ A fundamental condition that explains this paradoxical situation is the blurring of party and state, according to the Leninist party-state model, which had begun under the Derg and was continued by the EPRDF. Immediately after the fall of the Derg, for example, the EPRDF sent its 'cadres' south to spread the party's message and recruit new members.²⁵ In their own way, these party representatives, who became virtual 'kingmakers' in the new regional administrations,²⁶ showed the same ignorance of, and lack of respect for, local cultures and the same prejudice towards local people as did the officials of both previous governments. What made this all the more ironic was that they used 'objective' conceptions of ethnic identity in an ostensibly decentralizing project aimed at accommodating ethnic diversity through the territorial autonomy and self-determination of constituent units. It is not surprising, therefore, that the implementation of ethnic federalism, especially in the multiethnic regional states of the south and west, did not go entirely according to plan. In particular, ethnic elites reacted by 'inventing' or 'reinventing' group identities, in the imposed image of 'natural' ethnic units, with the aim of gaining more effective access to state resources.

What this suggests is that the principal threat to Ethiopian federalism comes not from ethnicity per se, but from three closely related features of EPRDF rule over the past fourteen years that are antithetical to the principles of federalism. These are: first, the failure to separate party and state; second, the continuation of the ethos of 'hegemonic control' that has characterised Ethiopian political culture since the late nineteenth century; and, third, the failure to appreciate the complexity of local cultures and to respect the attitudes, interests and aspirations of local people. Reversing these ingrained characteristics of Ethiopian political life represents by far the most fundamental challenge facing

Ethiopian federalism and the ruling party in the years to come. The acid test of their success in meeting this challenge will be whether the current Ethiopian constitution, unlike its three predecessors, manages to outlive the rule of the party that designed it.

Conclusion

It is now widely accepted that, although ethnic identities have no objective, or 'natural' determinants (they are 'imagined'), they represent a powerful and dynamic force to be reckoned with in contemporary African politics—especially in the competition for wealth, material resources and power (they are not 'imaginary'). Defining ethnicity is as problematic as defining ethnic groups, but the formulation used by Bruce Berman and others makes the key points well:

African ethnicities are viewed here as complex and protean expressions of the often distinctive African experiences of modernity, grounded in the changing material realities of state and market, and the confrontation of class, gender and generation.²⁷

If this is so, then it follows that 'ethnic pluralism is, and will remain, a fundamental characteristic of African modernity that must be recognised and incorporated within any project of democratic nation-building.'²⁸ Managing that incorporation, however, represents not so much a 'problem,' to which a definitive and clear-cut solution can be found, as a 'dilemma,' which must be tackled in a pragmatic, flexible and creative way. For, as the Ethiopian experience amply demonstrates, whatever political and institutional structure is devised to manage ethnic diversity, the structure will be required both to express and ignore ethnic differences simultaneously.²⁹

The Ethiopian model of federal decentralisation probably goes too far in its enthusiastic embrace of ethnicity as its fundamental organising principle, and there are signs that the EPRDF is attempting to step back from the 'ideological rigour'³⁰ of the federal constitution. One example of this is the recent decision by the federal government to make the demographically defined wereda (the lowest level of sub-national government), rather than the ethnically defined zone, the key administrative unit for the allocation of budgetary resources. Another, more drastic, revision of the constitution that would help to reduce the salience of ethnicity in Ethiopian politics would be no longer to require that each major national group be dominant in one, and only one, regional state and that each of these states be named after its dominant national group.

These requirements have resulted in the creation of two ‘mother states,’ one for each of the two largest ‘nationalities,’ the Oromo and Amhara, which together make up approximately 60 percent of the total population of the country. Breaking up these states into smaller units would follow the example of Nigeria, the largest and longest surviving federation in Africa. At independence, in 1960, Nigeria inherited a tri-partite federal structure based on the country’s three largest ethnic groups, the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo and Yoruba. As already noted, Suberu suggests that a major ‘achievement’ of Nigerian federalism was progressively to fragment these ethnicities, which are now territorially dispersed amongst approximately 22 regional states.

But, as Suberu also argues, the main threat to the survival of the Nigerian federation has come not from the use of federal decentralisation to accommodate and manage ethnic diversity, but from the potential undermining of its federal character by the concentration of power at the centre, and the consequent tendency towards single-party domination of the entire federation. Likewise, one must conclude that, if ethnic federalism in Ethiopia runs the risk of failure, it is not so much because it is too ‘ethnic,’ but because it is not sufficiently federal.

Notes

¹ Christopher Clapham, ‘Controlling Space in Ethiopia,’ in *Remapping Ethiopia: Socialism & After*, ed. Wendy James et al. (Oxford: James Curry Press and University of Ohio Press, 2002), 27.

² Ethiopia’s first and second constitutions were introduced under the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1931 and 1955, respectively. The third was introduced under the rule of Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1987, with the establishment of the People’s Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE).

³ Three examples of significant collections of comparative papers on the political accommodation of ethnic diversity, published since 1998, that contain no chapters on Ethiopia are: Crawford Young, ed., *Ethnic Diversity and Public Policy: A Comparative Enquiry* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998); Don MacIver, ed., *The Politics of Multinational States* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1999); Bruce Berman, Dickson Eyoh and Will Kymlicka, eds., *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 2004).

⁴ The article is based on the introduction to a book on Ethiopian federalism, to be published in early 2006. The book resulted from a seminar, organised by the British Council and Addis Ababa University in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and held at Addis Ababa University in April 2004. David Turton, ed., *Ethnic Federalism: The Ethiopian Experience in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford and

Addis Ababa: James Currey Publishers and Addis Ababa University Press, forthcoming).

⁵ Kenneth Wheare, *Federal Government*, 4th ed., (London: Oxford University Press, 1963). Quoted in McIver, *Politics of Multinational States*, 24.

⁶ Perhaps the leading proponent of the view that this is a thoroughly positive development is Will Kymlicka, for whom a commitment to minority rights and a concern for 'cultural membership' is not only consistent with individual freedom, but also capable of promoting it. See Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 75.

⁷ Will Kymlicka, 'Emerging Western Models of Multination Federalism: Are They Relevant for Africa?', in Turton, *Ethnic Federalism*.

⁸ Walker Connor, 'Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying,' *World Politics* 24, no. 3 (1972): 319-55.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Wendy James et al., eds., *Remapping Ethiopia: Socialism & After* (Oxford: James Curry Press and University of Ohio Press, 2002).

¹¹ Clapham, 'Controlling Space in Ethiopia,' 27-28.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Yash Ghai, 'Decentralization and the Accommodation of Ethnic Diversity,' in *Ethnic Diversity and Public Policy: A Comparative Enquiry*, ed. Crawford Young (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1998), 38.

¹⁴ Clapham, 'Afterward,' in Turton, *Ethnic Federalism*.

¹⁵ Siegfried Pausewang, Kjetil Tronvoll and Lovise Aalen, 'Conclusion: Democracy Unfulfilled?', in *Ethiopia Since the Derg: A Decade of Democratic Pretension and Performance*, ed. Siegfried Pausewang, Kjetil Tronvoll and Lovise Aalen (London and New York: Zed Books Ltd., 2002), 230.

¹⁶ Assefa Fiseha, 'Theory Versus Practice in the Implementation of Ethiopia's Ethnic Federalism,' in Turton, *Ethnic Federalism*.

¹⁷ These are the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation (OPDO), the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM), the Southern Ethiopian Peoples' Democratic Front (SEPDE) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

¹⁸ These are the Afar People's Democratic Organisation (APDO), the Somali People's Democratic Front (SPDF), the Gambella Peoples' Democratic Front (GPDF), the Benshangul Gumuz Peoples' Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF) and the Harari National League (HNL).

¹⁹ In words that also might apply, with some justice, to Ethiopia and the EPRDF, Dominic Lieven and John McGarry write, 'Probably the most important fact about the Soviet Union's constitution was that whereas the state apparatus was, at least in theory, federated, the Communist Party was not.' See John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary, eds., *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation: Case Studies of Protracted Ethnic Conflict* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 64.

²⁰ Rotimi T. Suberu, *Federalism and Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 2001); Rotimi T. Suberu, 'Federalism and the Management of Ethnic Conflict: The Nigerian Experience,' in Turton, *Ethnic Federalism*.

²¹ Sara Vaughan, 'Responses to Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia's Southern Region,' in Turton, *Ethnic Federalism*.

²² Constitution of the FDRE, Article 39, 5.

²³ Dereje Feyissa, 'Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia: The Experience of the Gambella Regional State,' in Turton, *Ethnic Federalism*.

²⁴ As Kymlicka puts it, 'The Ethiopian constitution reads as if someone attempted to simply deduce the appropriate structure of the federal state from a set of first principles, in conjunction with a census of ethnolinguistic groups.' See Kymlicka, 'Emerging Western Models.'

²⁵ Vaughan, 'Responses to Ethnic Federalism.'

²⁶ Dereje, 'Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia.'

²⁷ Berman, Dickson and Kymlicka, *Ethnicity and Democracy*, 319.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Kymlicka, 'Emerging Western Models.'

Leveraging the Global to Empower Local Struggles: Resistance and Efficacy in Transnational Feminist Networks¹

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JULIE J. TAYLOR

Introduction

The last decade has seen the emergence of a wealth of literature on 'globalisation,' stemming from a wide range of academic disciplines and encapsulating a host of different approaches to the phenomenon. Despite their differences, however, these accounts tend to share some common tendencies, such as seeing capitalism as the driving force and logic behind recent transformations. As Suzanne Bergeron argues, the conventional account of globalisation is globalocentric in assuming the existence of a power structure in which global capital dominates its others. It is disempowering in its relentless insistence that this force determines all outcomes. And its tendency to articulate only technical and abstract economic processes contributes to a 'narrative of eviction' that excludes the stories, forms and practices that tend to disrupt its presumed order.²

Perhaps in response to such 'exclusions,' and in a bid to reveal grounded processes of agency and resistance within the context of global economic restructuring, a rich body of work on transnational networks and transnational social movements has very recently developed.³

These authors see globalisation as having opened up new possibilities for social movements and advocacy; and many have celebrated such 'transnationalisms' as new expressions of subversive popular resistance by ordinary people to counter capital and neoliberalism 'from below.'⁴ Accordingly, 'global neoliberalism is not just a structure of domination, it is also a set of ideological and organisational structures vulnerable to being leveraged by oppositional movements'⁵ and such movements may be envisioned as evidence of 'counter-hegemonic globalisation.'⁶ Transnational activism is by no means unprecedented, as Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink point out in their discussion of historical forerunners to modern advocacy networks, such as the antislavery or women's suffrage movements. Nor should transnational activism be reduced to a response to, or side effect of, globalisation.⁷ There has, however, been a tremen-

J. Taylor, 'Leveraging the Global to Local Struggles: Resistance and Efficacy in Transnational Feminist Networks', *STAIR* 1, No 2 (2005): 101-116.

dous growth in such networks in the last thirty years, no doubt aided by new travel and communication technologies. For example, Keck and Sikkink state that there are presently five times as many organisations working on human rights than there were in 1950.

In this essay, I will focus on one particular type of 'transnationalism,' that is, transnational feminist⁸ networks, within which women have organised in response to the hegemonies of global capital. More specifically, and in contrast to other discussions that have emphasised women's organising around 'women's rights as human rights,'⁹ I consider feminist networks that coalesce around struggles concerning labour and economy. The three case studies to which I refer concern networks that have bases in Latin America and the Caribbean.¹⁰

Despite being 'transnational,' and indeed being founded and conditional on 'the global,' I argue that these networks and their respective actions and achievements are primarily about 'the local.' That is, transnationally connected organisations are first and foremost engaged in local struggles and efficacious in local counter-hegemonic resistance, as opposed to challenging the wider global regime, even though neo-liberalism may indeed be a significant player in local oppressions. As Manisha Desai notes, 'Many resistance strategies embody a radical critique not just of global capital, but also of pre-existing social inequalities based on race, class, gender, sexuality and nationality.'¹¹

It is clear from the case studies that I discuss, and from the literature on feminist transnational networks more generally, that the conceptual categories used by theorists and researchers—namely the 'global/local' dichotomy—are inadequate for mapping women's counter-hegemonies, given the complex and intertwined relationship between the two 'spheres,' and given that the origins of various types of hegemonies are multiple, situated both 'locally' and 'globally.' Despite the *theoretical* shortcomings of the global/local dichotomy in assisting interpretation of transnational networks, however, it is also evident that the ways in which women's organisations appeal to other actors' perceptions of 'the local' and 'the global,' as if they could be located, can be politically efficacious.

I compare and contrast the different types of 'global leverage' strategies that network actors employ to achieve their local goals, and question the extent to which these networks encounter what Joe Bandy terms 'the paradoxes of transnational civil society.'¹² Despite the possibilities that transnationalism engenders, and the various accomplishments of feminist organisations within these networks, the particular combination of issues that the networks address—i.e., the gender, labour and economy nexus—places constraints on the way in which they strategise politically and subsequently may work to constrain their efficacy, if not at the local

level, then most certainly at the supralocal. Before going on to discuss the case studies, I provide a brief introduction to the characteristics of networks and to the effects of globalisation on women and women's labour.

Transnational Networks and Information Politics

Peter Evans describes transnational networks as 'organisationally novel forms'¹³ that utilise their transnational connections to magnify the power of local movements. According to Sanjeev Khagram et al, such networks are just one type of transnational collective action. Whilst transnational social movements mobilise constituencies for collective action, often involving protest or disruption, and whilst transnational coalitions have shared strategies and a formal level of transnational contact, transnational advocacy networks are described as 'the most informal configuration of nonstate actors.'¹⁴ The major actors in transnational networks, linked together both formally and informally, are usually international and domestic non-governmental organisations (NGOs), local social movements, foundations, the media, churches, trade unions and intellectuals. Often, transnational networks identify themselves with social movements, such as environmentalism or feminism, as a means of highlighting the values, discourses and objectives that bind them together.¹⁵

Crucially, 'because most transnational nongovernmental actors are relatively weak, their ability to influence international politics is often based on the use of information, persuasion and moral pressure to contribute to change in international institutions and governments.'¹⁶ This draws our attention to the centrality of 'information,' 'knowledge,'¹⁷ and 'communicative power'¹⁸ to transnational networks, and indeed this is key for all the case studies that I discuss. Keck and Sikkink propose that 'at the core of network activity is the production, exchange and strategic use of information...[and] by overcoming the deliberate suppression of information that sustains many abuses of power, networks can help reframe international and domestic debates, changing their terms, their sites and the configuration of participants.'¹⁹ Jennifer Bickham Mendez confirms that the negotiating tactics of networks are quite different from other oppositional forms, which might use the threat of strikes, violence or simply have force in numbers. Instead, 'in the new context of weak labour and high mobility of capital, information becomes the key commodity.'²⁰ The travel and employment of information for the creation of international 'norms,' and common meanings against which states

and organisations can be judged, is key for what Sikkink refers to as the workings of 'soft power'.²¹ In a similar vein, John Dryzek refers to the capacity of networks to 'change the balance of competing discourses'²² in the international system. Information thus seems to constitute an operational fulcrum or interface between the 'global' and the 'local' in the context of transnational politics.

In addition to the exchange of information, networks also are characterised by other types of material and symbolic exchange. Whilst for less-powerful actors (often from 'the South'), networks may provide access to finance and leverage, more-powerful actors (often from 'the North') can gain credibility, legitimacy and reputation in the eyes of other actors as a product of their linkages with Southern partners. Whilst all network actors are in some way seeking to affect global power structures, networks themselves are also structured and influenced by power dynamics. For example, Sikkink highlights the role of differences in class, language, gender and ideology in creating 'internal asymmetries' within networks, and Bandy discusses internal conflict over organisational form, resources and strategic agendas. Such dynamics, of course, have implications for the efficacy of each organisation's counter-hegemonic actions.

The Gendered Effects of the Hegemonies of Global Capital

Evans states that globalisation has brought gender to the forefront of transnational social movements, and that 'until there has been a revolutionary transformation of gender roles, the disadvantages of allocating resources purely on the basis of market logic will fall particularly harshly on women.'²³ The rise of neoliberalism has introduced sets of policies that include, amongst others, trade liberalisation, privatisation, the reduction of state-subsidised social services such as health care and education, the lowering of wages and the erosion of labour rights.²⁴ According to Desai, structural adjustment has been the primary mechanism through which globalisation has affected women's daily lives in the South, adversely affecting their work and production strategies.²⁵ The feminisation of the global labour force has resulted in an increase in women's employment in low-paid jobs; in women's employment in the informal sector, leaving them with no formal protection, no benefits and wages below the poverty-level; and women's share of unpaid home labour as public funding for health, education and social services has declined. All these factors are pertinent to the contexts of the case studies that I discuss below. Whilst global capital shapes gendered oppression

'on the ground,' however, the immediate structures of oppression and exploitation that women's organisations confront directly are still local, taking the form, for example, of the household patriarchs, landowners, employers and managers who feature in the case studies.

Numerous women's transnational networks have developed, Nancy Naples and Desai argue, in response to the consequences of neoliberal policies, and such networks are using the transnational political stage to fight for social, economic, environmental and political justice,²⁶ making it clear that the effects of global restructuring are much broader than simply economic and that these effects are necessarily entwined. One of the primary routes for women's transnational organising has been through United Nations women's conferences, the first of which was held in Mexico in 1975.²⁷ I suggest in this essay that insofar as transnational networks can provide leverage locally, they may also have potential to change the effects of global structures.

While the emancipatory potential of such organising has been celebrated, it is also important to recognise the limitations of these feminist networks, and what such limitations mean for the ways in which, and extent to which, women are able to catalyse resistance. Robert O'Brien et al astutely argue that 'unorthodox organisational forms and tactics characterise women's civil society associations and their political struggles. This is because of structural constraints on women's activism which are caused by gender divisions of labour and power.'²⁸ Such constraints are multiple, including women's lack of financial and social resources and political experience, their lack of capacity to impose sanctions for failure to respect gender equity agendas, and the likelihood of having weak 'fallback' positions to retreat to as a threat in negotiations. Women 'must seek constructive engagement and 'entry' into institutional processes and cognitive frameworks, rather than employing more overtly political tactics of capturing the resources and undermining the public image of [multilateral] institutions in the way the environmental movement has been able to do.'²⁹ With that cautionary note in mind, I move on to discuss three examples of activism situated within women's transnational networks.

Transnational Organising for Maquila Workers' Rights in Central America

Mendez provides some interesting insights into the ways in which a transnational network³⁰ made up of women's organisations from Guate-

mala, Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador works to improve the lives and working conditions of female garment assembly workers (*maquilas*). Mendez describes how the globalisation of capital has resulted in the establishment of free trade zones around the world, and subsequently the multiplication of 'sweatshop' factories in which young female labour is highly exploited. This includes the location of apparel production in Central America and the Caribbean by Asian-based transnational corporations that aim to access the growing United States market and circumvent import quotas. The globalisation of the production process thus seeks maximum advantage for capital against labour, as well as seeking to avoid social and political interference.³¹ Mendez subsequently argues that the growth of the sweatshop industry has catalysed new transnational resistance initiatives and describes how localised grassroots organisations take advantage of a globalised political space in a bid to empower *maquilas*, not only in the workplace, but also at home and in society in general.

The formation of the *maquila* network in 1996 marks resistance against respective local male-dominated labour movements, from which the autonomous women's organisations have broken away due to unions' and federations' sexism, the exclusion of women from decision-making and the exclusion of *maquila* issues from their agendas. Interestingly, but perhaps not surprisingly, we see similar 'breakaways' taking place in the other cases that I shortly discuss. Mendez states that 'the formation of the Network has involved a process through which women have become more visible in grassroots politics and have articulated alternative conceptions of what constitutes political claims and who are legitimate political subjects. Such alternative conceptualisations indicate a shift in ways of 'doing politics'.³² This network formation process in itself, I would argue, punctuates resistance to local patriarchal hegemonies, and confirms Desai's suggestion that transnational networks may constitute a critique of local inequalities and hegemonies as much as global ones.

Central to the *maquila* organisations' utilisation of global networks is the utilisation of information. Similar to Keck and Sikkink and others, Mendez states that 'as grassroots politics has "gone global," social actors increasingly are engaging in "information politics" in an effort to achieve goals of social justice.'³³ In the case of the *maquila* workers, information is particularly important specifically because of its common absence. That is, there are very few publically accessible data or statistics on the working conditions or pay scales of *maquilas*, and the Network's key strategy has been to launch national and international awareness-raising campaigns regarding the daily realities of *maquila* workers. Hence, information is central to the Network's negotiating tactics at the

state and local levels. Importantly, 'the international character of the Network has not only drawn local media attention, but has added weight and legitimacy to members' negotiations with state agents and transnational capitalists.'³⁴ It is here that we see how network actors appeal to less tangible discursive resources, that is, other actors' imaginings of 'global' and 'local,' in order to leverage their own 'international' image and status vis-à-vis more powerful players.

In contrast to the optimistic tone of other authors,³⁵ Mendez calls for a more 'cautionary view' of the emancipatory character of transnational networks, highlighting the various limitations of the *maquila* solidarity network. She notes that some of the groups in the network have struggled to access 'transnational' political spaces to bring about their objectives, despite the transnational quality of the Network. For instance, unlike Zapatista and human rights networks,³⁶ the *maquila* network had little success with influencing global media and using international public opinion to pressure transnational organisations.³⁷ Linked to this is the fact that implementing 'accountability' politics and assigning blame for human rights and labour violations in the realm of the sweatshop industry proved to be difficult: for example, 'Large companies like JC Penney can easily point to subcontractors who can just as easily blame individual supervisors for rights violations.'³⁸

Furthermore, attempts to access the global media could 'backfire,' with network agents losing control of information and their intended message or, perhaps more seriously, causing sweatshop factories to relocate elsewhere, leaving many women out of work altogether. For this reason, employing strategies such as boycott campaigns, like the anti-Nestle Corporation boycott, would hinder, rather than help, the *maquila* network to achieve its goals. Some 'global' tools, then, prove to be a double-edged sword for local activists, in that they may reinforce the possibility of a locality becoming a 'pawn' in the hands of global capital.³⁹

Last but not least, the power dynamics present within transnational organising and politics constrains the efficacy of local action.⁴⁰ The *maquila* network struggled to enter certain other networks of NGOs—for example, the set of Northern transnational alliances with local trade union federations—due to narrow normative definitions of what constitutes a 'labour organisation.' Equally difficult have been attempts to access institutions of global governance like the International Labour Organisation, or forums like international meetings of Central American presidents. Again, this points to the continued divide between women's movements and labour movements more generally, which clearly operates as a constraining factor for women's resistance to both 'local' and 'global' hegemonies.

Mendez's piece, then, comments foremost on the efficacies of this particular transnational feminist network, which are constrained by the network's particular goals—addressing labour issues closely tied to gender and class, and to the global economy—and the limited spectrum of strategies that it can use to attain those goals. It is also constrained by the power relations operating within the transnational political terrain. In turn, the network's efficacies at different levels perhaps determine or structure its realistic 'targets.' Although perhaps desiring to resist the global conditions that shape the lives of *maquila* workers at a transnational level, it seems that the *maquila* network is more efficacious in terms of resisting local hegemonies, including the patriarchal labour movement and state disinformation.

Local Engagements with Transnational Feminism in Brazil

I now move on to consider Millie Thayer's discussions of the roles played by both a rural Brazilian women's movement—the Rural Women Workers' Movement (MMTR)—and an urban Brazilian feminist health organisation (SOS Corpo) within the contours of transnational feminism. Regarding the MMTR, and in line with other authors mentioned in this essay, Thayer first contests the notion that global capital erases the agency of the 'local.' Rather, Thayer argues that the local is the primary site where globalisation is constituted, as well as where its effects are played out. Secondly, she argues that although globalisation has magnified poverty—including the failure of small farmers to compete with imports and their subsequent marginalisation—it also has potentially positive effects, with 'transnational connections offer[ing] new possibilities for change.'⁴¹ In contrast to Mendez's cautionary tone, then, Thayer's is much more optimistic.

Transnational connections among Brazilian feminists and those in other countries have drawn diverse movements together and allowed for travelling Northern 'feminisms' to find their way into new spheres of activism. Thayer's key point, however, is that transnational feminisms are not simply adopted wholesale by local movements seeking power, but that local gender politics are the result of 'contestation, negotiation and appropriation in a transnational social sphere.'⁴² Here she highlights the role of local agency in drawing on transnational resources, specifically intangible resources such as gender discourse. Thayer also shows that a rural Southern women's movement, the MMTR, 'despite apparent isola-

tion and backwardness,'⁴³ had its own forms of power, grounded in its own 'local-ness,' which it deployed on the global playing-field.

The MMTR had a dual role structured along the axes of class and gender: on the one hand, it identified its members as small agriculturalists threatened by the economic consequences of globalisation, and on the other, it supported rural women's struggles against various aspects of local patriarchy. Similar to what Mendez and Marina Karides describe, the MMTR women had struggled for recognition in their respective 'male union brotherhood,' which placed little value on their participation. On the one hand, then, its goals were class-based and shared with the union movement, whilst on the other, it focused more singularly on women's concerns, and this aspect of their struggle was ultimately linked with transnational feminist movements. This case, like the others that I discuss, points to the increasing relevance of the women's and labour movements to each other, and, indeed, the necessity of their combination, given the feminisation of the global labour market and the need for women to be recognised as workers. At the same time, it points to the very real constraints that women face in their efforts to link and combine the two movements.

The MMTR gained access to transnational feminist resources and discourses through international funders with Brazil-based offices and also through Brazilian feminist NGOs, including SOS Corpo. The power dynamics within these transnational networks themselves are not to be overlooked,⁴⁴ and Thayer claims that 'the encounter of the sertaneja women's organisation with transnational feminism did not, in fact, represent a unilateral transfer of discursive and material resources, but rather a relationship of exchange, albeit an unequal one.'⁴⁵ The MMTR's chief asset was that it represented, and was in some ways a gatekeeper to, a grassroots constituency. Gaining access to such constituencies was desirable for both Brazilian NGOs and international development agencies because it allowed them to establish legitimacy and credibility with other social actors, such as funders or feminist movements in home countries. The MMTR, therefore, used its own 'local' characteristics for successful leverage in the transnational context; 'the global context conferred new worth on local knowledge and experiences hitherto taken for granted by class allies in the sertao.'⁴⁶ Over time, the MMTR's global connections began to draw the attention of union leaders, such that local power dynamics gradually shifted as the union realised the value of the women's organisation.

In the example of the MMTR, linkages with transnational networks are used to target and resist both local hegemonies, to the extent that the MMTR women aim to deconstruct local patriarchies and globalised

forms of oppression, to the extent that they criticise and challenge the economic restructuring which affects not only women but all members of their agriculturalist class. Thayer demonstrates that rural women in the MMTR actively appropriate and revise a transnational resource—that is, aspects of ‘Northern’ feminist discourses about gender—and use it to forward their own political agendas, which include rebuilding links with men on the basis of equality. Hence, ‘the imported academic discourse of gender becomes a tool for critiquing and reconstructing social relations among male and female members of the same class-based movement.’⁴⁷ Here, then, it seems that global connections—and the intangible resources which these provide—are being used to tackle predominantly local politics. At the same time, the MMTR appeals to and relies on Northern and urban actors’ perceptions of ‘the local’ as a means of exercising power. This mirrors, in reverse, the way in which Mendez’s *maquila* network appeals to local and national imaginings of the ‘global’ and ‘international’ to add weight to their own arguments.

Although space constraints preclude elaboration here, Thayer also discusses the urban NGO SOS Corpo and its relationship to ‘traveling’ feminist discourses in the 1990s.⁴⁸ Like the MMTR, SOS also selects and transforms parts of global discourse, in this case combining Northern concepts of ‘gender’ with local concepts of ‘citizenship,’ and thus redefining citizenship in ways that, first, incorporate rights to allow women’s equal participation in society and politics, and, second, critique Brazilian neoliberal policies and their poverty-inducing effects. The example of the NGO SOS, like the MMTR movement, seems to reinforce the idea that transnational networks and the non-material resources they provide, once combined with local resources and discourse, are being employed actively in women’s local struggles against gender inequality and the local effects of global neoliberalism. The case of the MMTR, however, more so than SOS, demonstrates particularly well the ways in which women leverage ‘the global’ locally and ‘the local’ globally.

Transnational Activism for Domestic Workers in Trinidad and Tobago

The last case study to which I refer concerns the transnational activism of the National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE), which works to raise awareness about the exploitation of domestic workers in Trinidad and Tobago.⁴⁹ Like Mendez and Naples and Desai, Karides emphasises that women and Third World workers increasingly are exploited

in a globalising economy, and that 'to address the economic hardship of unemployment, underemployment and discrimination in the formal labour market, women engage in informal work such as domestic service, which is labour intensive and requires minimum capital.'⁵⁰ Domestic workers in Trinidad and Tobago have low earnings, lack formal employment benefits, are not covered by the national insurance programme and are denied the guarantees that are granted to other workers. In the eyes of the state, therefore, domestic work is not recognised as 'work.' As in the Brazilian and Central American case studies, gender and labour issues are fused together in this Caribbean example.

NUDE was initially a branch of domestic workers under the Shipbuilders and Ship Workers Allied Union. Like the women's organisations described in the other case studies, NUDE broke away from this union because it failed to address women's concerns. Once again, this pattern highlights that women's resistance to local patriarchies appears to precede—and later to be reinforced by—their transnational networking. According to Karides, NUDE has three main ways of linking the 'local' with the 'global' in order to empower their local struggles and shape state policies regarding women's domestic work: first, by involving itself with international activism and attending international women's conferences; second, by holding the state accountable to international agreements; and third, by publicising their international activity locally. Like in the cases described by Thayer and Mendez, this union employs resources that are linked to 'the transnational' in order to resist local hegemonies that are the by-product of both global restructuring and colonial labour legislation.

One of NUDE's main strategies has revolved around its long-standing engagement with an international campaign called 'Wages for Housework,' of which it has been a member since 1975. Karides analyses newspaper articles and statements published by NUDE that reveal the Union's persistent efforts to inform the Trinidadian public about the conditions faced by local women workers in the context of a global economy. In this context, NUDE's self-representation as a transnational 'player' in the campaign gave it credibility and strengthened its case, particularly when catalysing 'accountability politics'—that is, showcasing the Trinidadian government's international responsibilities towards domestic workers' rights. NUDE consistently emphasised the similarities between its local campaign and the agenda of the international community. We see here that NUDE leverages its own 'international' image locally in order to strengthen its bargaining power with the state.

Furthermore, state identity politics form an important 'resource' for NUDE, because one of the ways in which Trinidad establishes its 'mod-

ern' credibility in the eyes of Western political and economic leaders is through participation in international agreements and forums. NUDE effectively manoeuvred around this dynamic, taking advantage of the state's desire to be perceived on the international stage as a 'modern,' 'developed' society. Karides states, 'By exposing nationally and internationally the remnants of colonial legislation in state policy, NUDE challenges the nation's international image'⁵¹ and 'maintains that the nation's global status relies on upholding international agreements.'⁵² I would argue, then, that by drawing on and utilising local perceptions of the global/local dichotomy, NUDE empowers itself in its local struggles for domestic workers.

To what extent are NUDE's actions efficacious? Karides points out that the organisation's members are split between two perspectives. On the one hand, although the Trinidadian government has participated in international agreements regarding the status of female domestic workers, this has not necessarily led to any real change in the women's realities. Deborah Stienstra makes a similar point regarding the acceptance of women's caucuses by governments, transnational corporations and international financial institutions. She argues that governments can employ the language of women's movements without actually implementing or ensuring any concrete changes. On the other hand, the international involvement of NUDE has achieved changes in state policies. For example, in 1995, Trinidad and Tobago's parliament finally gave official recognition to women's traditional household labour as work, and presently the parliament, for the first time, is giving serious consideration to granting domestic workers full rights and recognition as workers. NUDE has also managed to secure workers' inclusion under the National Insurance System. Last but not least, NUDE's involvement with the 'Wages for Housework' campaign has contributed to the Trinidadian government becoming 'an international leader in accounting unremunerated work in national statistics.'⁵³ This outcome of NUDE's work suggests that its efficacy at the national level has potential to indirectly catalyse global effects, as other states are encouraged–or pressured–to follow suit.

Conclusions

In this brief investigation into 'counter-hegemonic globalisation,' I have focused on the ways in which women's organisations utilise transnational networks primarily to be efficacious in local struggles, be they at the community or the state level. This is not to say, however, that these

organisations do not desire 'global' influence. Whilst the conceptual dichotomy of 'global/local' is inadequate for the purposes of describing the resistance that transnational feminist networks engender, because 'local' and 'global' hegemonies are to some extent always conflated in their gendered materialisation, the same dichotomy proves to be a useful and malleable tool for women's resistance strategies. Southern network actors emphasise their own 'global' or 'local' image and status, as perceived by others, under particular circumstances and for particular ends, in a bid to counteract more powerful players, be those local patriarchs, state representatives or Northern NGOs.

Other authors have highlighted the centrality of 'information politics' to transnational networks.⁵⁴ I would argue, however, that it is not simply a question of mobilising and disclosing information about—for example—exploitative working conditions in order to counter abuses of power and create international norms. Based on evidence presented here, the manipulation and leverage of additional intangible resources that are themselves closely tied to the workings of networks, such as discourses on gender and other actors' imaginings of 'the global' and 'the local,' also play a key role in empowering women in local struggles.

In addressing the gender-labour interface, these feminist networks challenge public-private boundaries, as have international women's campaigns against violence and the earlier anti-slavery and anti-footbinding movements.⁵⁵ Significantly, the networks also bring to light, and simultaneously challenge, the prevailing and persistent division between women's and labour movements.

Whilst for some organisations, such as Thayer's MMTR, the prospect of local change and empowerment—at least in terms of gender relations—seems bright, and the remainder of the case studies demonstrates that the efficacy of networks is constrained both by their particular matrix of goals and by the limited spectrum of strategies that are effective in achieving those goals. The studies confirm O'Brien et al's proposition that feminist networks are forced to rely on non-overt political tactics more than, for example, environmental networks. Women's organisations must not only negotiate power struggles on the transnational political stage, but also the power dynamics extant within women's networks themselves. Taken together, these factors may curb the extent of women's organisations' transnational influence, instead foster the leverage of 'the global' for local resistance. This is not to say that the snowballing of local achievements cannot influence gender policies internationally—this potential is seen in the Trinidadian case. All in all, women's networks, translocal in both consciousness and action,⁵⁶ do indeed offer tools for local transformation, but the 'global' extent of this is yet to be seen.

¹ The author thanks Professor Peter Evans and Dr. Cathie Lloyd for their comments on earlier drafts.

² Suzanne Bergeron, 'Political Economy Discourses of Globalization and Feminist Politics,' *Signs* 26, no. 4 (2001): 983-1006, 983.

³ For example, Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); Michael Smith and Luis Guarnizo, *Transnationalism from Below* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1998); Marianne Marchand and Anne Runyan, *Gender and Global Restructuring: Sightings, Sites and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 2000); Michael Burawoy et al, *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections and Imaginations in a Postmodern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Peter Evans, 'Fighting Marginalization with Transnational Networks: Counter-Hegemonic Globalization,' *Contemporary Sociology* 29, no. 1 (2000): 230-241; Millie Thayer, 'Traveling Feminisms: From Embodied Women to Gendered Citizenship' in *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, Michael Burawoy et al, ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Millie Thayer, 'Transnational Feminism: Reading Joan Scott in the Brazilian Sertao,' *Ethnography* 2, no. 2 (2001): 243-271; Millie Thayer, 'Negotiating the Global: Northeast Brazilian Women's Movements and The Transnational Feminist Public' (PhD Diss., University of California at Berkeley, 2004); Sanjeev Khagram et al, *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks and Norms* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002); Nancy Naples and Manisha Desai, ed., *Women's Activism and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2002); Sidney Tarrow, *The New Transnational Activism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Joe Bandy, 'Paradoxes of Transnational Civil Societies under Neoliberalism: The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras,' *Social Problems* 51, no. 3 (2004): 410-431.

⁴ Smith and Guarnizo, *Transnationalism from Below*.

⁵ Peter Evans, 'Counter-Hegemonic Globalization: Transnational Social Movements in the Contemporary Global Political Economy' in *Handbook of Political Sociology*, Thomas Janoski, Alexander Hicks and Mildred Schwartz, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁶ Evans, 'Fighting Marginalization.'

⁷ Tarrow, *New Transnational Activism*; Marcos Ancelovici, 'Organizing against Globalisation: The Case of ATTAC in France,' *Politics and Society* 30, no. 3 (2002): 427-463.

⁸ I employ the term 'feminist' rather than 'women's' networks based on Molyneux's discussion of 'practical' versus 'strategic' gender interests. Molyneux argues that 'practical interests' concern women organizing to meet basic needs that are a result of the sexual division of labour, whereas 'strategic interests' refer to women's intent to challenge systems of patriarchy and transform gender relations to enhance women's position in society. The networks discussed here, for the main part, appear to address both practical and strategic needs, albeit to varying extents, hence their 'feminist' character. Maxine Molyneux, 'Analysing Women's Movements,' in *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender, Analysis and Policy*, Cecile Jackson and Ruth Pearson, ed., (London: Routledge, 1998).

⁹ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*; Karen Brown Thompson, 'Women's Rights as Human Rights' in Khagram et al, *Restructuring World Politics*.

¹⁰ Thayer, 'Traveling Feminisms'; Thayer, 'Transnational Feminism'; Thayer, 'Negotiating the Global'; Jennifer Bickham Mendez, 'Creating Alternatives from a Gender Perspective: Transnational Organizing for Maquila Workers' Rights in Central America,' in *Women's Activism and Globalization*, Nancy Naples and Manisha Desai, ed., (London: Routledge, 2002); Marina Karides, 'Linking Local Efforts with Global Struggle: Trinidad's National Union of Domestic Employees,' in *Women's Activism and Globalization*, Nancy Naples and Manisha Desai, ed., (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹¹ Manisha Desai, 'Transnational Solidarity: Women's Agency, Structural Adjustment and Globalization,' in *Women's Activism and Globalization*, Nancy Naples and Manisha Desai, ed., (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 33.

¹² Joe Bandy, 'Paradoxes of Transnational Civil Societies under Neoliberalism: The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras,' *Social Problems* 51, no. 3 (2004): 410-431.

¹³ Evans, 'Counter-Hegemonic Globalization.'

¹⁴ Khagram et al, *Restructuring World Politics*, 6.

¹⁵ Valerie Sperling et al, 'Constructing Global Feminism: Transnational Advocacy Networks and Russian Women's Activism,' *Signs* 26, no. 4 (2001): 1155-1186.

¹⁶ Khagram et al, *Restructuring World Politics*, 11.

¹⁷ Diane Stone, 'Introduction: Global Knowledge and Advocacy Networks,' *Global Networks* 2, no. 1 (2002), 1-11.

¹⁸ John Dryzek, 'Transnational Democracy,' *Journal of Political Philosophy* 7, no. 1 (1999): 30-51.

¹⁹ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*, x.

²⁰ Mendez, 'Creating Alternatives,' 131.

²¹ Kathryn Sikkink, 'Restructuring World Politics: The Limits and Asymmetries of Soft Power' in *Restructuring World Politics: Transnational Social Movements, Networks and Norms*, Khagram et al, ed., (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002).

²² Dryzek, 'Transnational Democracy,' 46.

²³ Evans, 'Counter-Hegemonic Globalization,' 21.

²⁴ George Yudice, 'The Globalization of Culture and the New Civil Society,' in *Cultures of Politics, Politics of Cultures: Re-visioning Latin American Social Movements*, Sonia Alvarez et al, ed., (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

²⁵ Desai, 'Transnational Solidarity,' 16.

²⁶ Cf. Karides, 'Linking Local Efforts'; Deborah Stienstra, 'Dancing Resistance from Rio to Beijing: Transnational Women's Organizing and U.N. Conferences 1992-6,' in *Gender and Global Restructuring: Sightings, Sites and Resistance*, Marianne Marchand and Anne Runyan, ed., (London: Routledge, 2000).

²⁷ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*; Stienstra, 'Dancing Resistance'; Robert O'Brien et al, *Contesting Global Governance: Multilateral Economic Institutions and Global Social Movements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁸ O'Brien et al, *Contesting Global Governance*, 32.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 33.

³⁰ The Central American Network of Women in Solidarity with *Maquila* Workers.

³¹ Arif Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997), 91.

³² Mendez, 'Creating Alternatives,' 140.

³³ *Ibid.*, 130.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 133.

³⁵ For example, Evans, 'Fighting Marginalization' and Thayer, 'Transnational Feminism.'

³⁶ See Yudice, 'Globalization of Culture.'

³⁷ Mendez, 'Creating Alternatives,' 137.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 138.

³⁹ Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura*.

⁴⁰ Cf. Thayer, 'Transnational Feminism.'

⁴¹ Thayer, 'Transnational Feminism,' 243-271, 245.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 246.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 244.

⁴⁴ Cf. Mendez, 'Creating Alternatives'; Sikkink, 'Restructuring World Politics.'

⁴⁵ Thayer, 'Transnational Feminism,' 254.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 264.

⁴⁸ Thayer, 'Traveling Feminisms' and 'Negotiating the Global.'

⁴⁹ Karides, 'Linking Local Efforts.'

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 171.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 168.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 170.

⁵⁴ Khagram et al, *Restructuring World Politics*; Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*.

⁵⁵ Keck and Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders*.

⁵⁶ Dirlik, *The Postcolonial Aura*.

United Nations Commission on Human Security, Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People.

(New York, 2003. 168 pp. £16.00 (pbk). ISBN 0974110809)

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Well-presented ideas that gave intellectual traction to complex problems can do wonders. They can provoke debate, guide action and open purse strings. The Commission on Human Security's report, co-authored by Amartya Sen and Sadako Ogata, attempts to achieve the latter two aims. The report outlines a 'human security agenda' for the United Nations and the international community. It is a broad and powerful synthesis that offers something conceptually distinct from traditional concepts of 'state security' and 'human development'—but which still provides concrete guidelines for action.

The report argues that the concept of human security—a concept that values individuals' security needs rather than the security needs of states—should be at the heart of international cooperation. Human security is distinct from and complementary to existing notions of state security and human development. A human security approach trumps old-fashioned state security, because it recognises that states often cannot prevent—and are sometimes responsible for—actions that damage human freedoms and human fulfilment, such as people trafficking, ethnic conflict and international terrorism. Such an approach also compliments human development efforts, because it pays attention to the 'downside risks' of increased interdependence such as economic frailty, exploitation and second-class citizenship.

The report's definition of human security as protecting 'the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfilment' is necessarily vague. As its authors note, 'What people consider to be 'vital'...varies across individuals and societies.' However, from the examples given in the report, this vital core includes political, personal and socio-economic rights. What is not clear is how one might adjudicate between the different elements of human security. Kanti Bajpai, in his article 'Human Security: Concept and Measurement',² has argued that the 'human security approach' is the child of two very different parents. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) typically has depicted economic develop-

ment that benefits the individual as an essential element in satisfying the 'vital core' of human needs. This report, in large part, reflects this way of thinking. By contrast, the 'middle powers'—led by Norway and Canada—that developed this concept in the mid-1990s presented problems of governance and violence—children in armed conflict, international humanitarian and human rights law, international criminal proceedings, conflict prevention, transnational organised crime and so on—as key.

Both strands of thought emphasise the individual's place in these issues, but the second approach is likely to be appreciated more by rich Western states currently at risk from terrorism. This is so for two reasons. First, the cognitive leap from terrorism to transnational crime is much easier—such an approach can be portrayed more easily as a response to the threat of terrorism. Second, such an approach shifts the moral and financial burden from the West.

To note this conceptual divergence is not to say that the report ends in vague generalities acceptable to all but satisfying to none. The report recommends the creation of an international framework on migration to augment existing agreements on asylum; the creation of a human security fund to cushion states from economic or environmental disaster; and a radical vision of peace-building that aims to 'recast social, economic and political bases of power,' rather than politically constructed exit strategies. Future research must assess whether these recommendations have filtered into international action. The initial record is not promising. At the 2005 World Summit, the UN committed themselves to 'discussing and defining the notion of human security,'³ which some might have thought was accomplished ably by this report.

Notes

¹ United Nations, Commission on Human Security, *Human Security Now: Protecting and Empowering People*, New York, 2003.

² Kanti Bajpai, 'Human Security: Concept and Measurement,' CIAONet working paper.

³ 2005 World Summit Outcome, <http://www.un.org/summit2005/documents.html>.

Gilles Kepel. The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West. Translated by Pascale Ghazaleh.

Olivier Roy, Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah

(London: Hurst, 2004. 350 pp. £16.95 (pbk). ISBN 1850655987)

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These two French scholars of Islam agree on something: both argue that political Islam, or Islamism, failed sometime back in the early- to mid-1990s.¹ But Gilles Kepel and Olivier Roy part ways after that. Kepel uses the writings of Al Qaeda's political mastermind Ayman al-Zawahiri to argue that Islamists recognised their failings in the 1990s and sought to rectify their weakness with a spectacular call to arms—the attacks of September 11, 2001. The objective of the 9/11 strike at the 'faraway enemy' was to mobilise the Muslim masses behind the Islamists' banner, impelling them to overthrow their own corrupt Muslim leaders or the 'nearby enemy' and establish an Islamic state. Earlier terrorist attacks—such as the bombings of American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya—were designed to recruit the 9/11 bombers, and later attacks—from Bali to Madrid—were meant to demonstrate to future recruits the resilience of Al Qaeda in the face of the United States-led war on terror. (Both Kepel and Roy observe that the Al Qaeda brand also has been 'franchised' to local radicals post-9/11.) The ongoing failure of this 'war,' according to Kepel's analysis, is due to the fact that the U.S. is 'culturally incapable' of understanding an enemy that is not a state. This is also why the U.S. chose the traditional state targets of Afghanistan and Iraq.

Kepel contends that today's Islamism is connected intimately to current events in the Middle East, particularly—and there is a chapter on each—the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the religiously-legitimised authoritarianism of Saudi Arabia's ruling clan and the war in Iraq. For example, he argues that Al Qaeda latched onto the devastation of the second Palestinian intifada in order to relaunch the Islamist cause, and that it sought to replicate the tactic of suicide bombings used by Palestinian militants in order to win the same legitimacy and sympathy from the Muslim street. More controversially, in another chapter, Kepel discusses the neoconservative movement in the U.S., arguing that their resolute determination to protect Israel by striking at Iraq and other recalcitrant authoritarian states is the 'underlying cause of unrest in the region.'³ He goes on to point out a confluence of goals and means

between Al Qaeda and the neocons—to rid the Middle East of its corrupt authoritarian regimes using violence—as well as the similar opportunism of using the war on terror to further their goals of mobilising the Muslim masses and creating a American- and Israeli-friendly Middle East.

Roy outlines a different trajectory since the mid-1990s and highlights the rise of ‘neo-fundamentalism,’ as professed by Al Qaeda, Saudi Wahabis and others, from the ashes of Islamism—for instance, the Iranian Republic or the Algerian Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). Neo-fundamentalists reject the Islamists’ political prescription to create an Islamic state and instead seek to (re)build the Islamic society or ummah one pious Muslim at a time. According to Roy, neo-fundamentalists believe in such a strict adherence to a literal understanding of the Qur’an and the Sunna that they discard more than a millennium of commentaries on Islamic law, as well as theology, philosophy and literature. The result is a ‘globalised Islam’ that is, firstly, ‘de-cultured’ from the customs, society, and history of traditional Muslim locales from Malaysia to Morocco; secondly, ‘de-territorialised’ in that it can be practiced anywhere; and, thirdly, ‘individualised’ to the extent that Islam is defined by each believer in the absence of a single religious authority. Individualisation also is evident in the injunction by the most radical of neo-fundamentalists for Muslims, as individuals, to engage in violent *jihad*. Traditionally—and this remains the mainstream view, *jihad* is a collective duty for a community to defend themselves against an external threat. As such, the well-known Qatari Sheikh Qaradawi condones Palestinian suicide attacks as ‘defensive *jihad*,’ while condemning the 9/11 attacks as murder.⁴

The rise of neo-fundamentalism, according to Roy, has benefited from three trends in the Muslim world. First, ‘the failure of political Islam’⁵ saw Islamists drop their internationalist revolutionary program to become nationalist social conservatives, prioritising politics over religion. Radicals now have to look for inspiration elsewhere. Second, neo-fundamentalists have built upon the social phenomenon—and government encouragement—of the ‘re-Islamisation’ of Muslim societies across the world in the sense of increased personal religiosity—for instance, the growing number of women wearing headscarves from Cairo to Toronto. Finally, neo-fundamentalists have tapped into the dislocation felt by certain individuals as a result of globalisation and have offered their own ‘globalised Islam’ as a panacea—making neo-fundamentalism both a product and a source of globalisation itself.

The differences between these two analyses are fundamental. According to Kepel, today’s Islamist terrorism is linked to pre-existing conflicts in the Middle East, and Islamists aim to destroy current Middle Eastern regimes and to establish an Islamic state. Compare this with Roy’s analysis, which suggests that the *jihad* that radical neo-fundamentalists advocate has

no political goal—in the Middle East or elsewhere. Rather, Roy contends that this violence is in line with ‘a Western tradition of individual and pessimistic revolt for an elusive ideal world.’⁶ It is no surprise to Roy, therefore, that European recruits for *jihad* have similar profiles to the outcasts enlisted by 1970s leftist radicals, with both groups demonising the same perceived evils: imperialism and/or the U.S..

A similar divergence of opinion is seen in the two scholars’ understandings of Muslims in the West. Kepel is the more optimistic of the two, suggesting that these Muslim minorities could be the vanguard of democratic reform in the Muslim world. However, it is unclear how he reaches this conclusion, as his chapter on European Muslims primarily deals with the increasing popularity of Salafism,⁷ which is roughly equivalent to Roy’s neo-fundamentalism, and Islamism in France before and in the wake of 9/11. We are, unfortunately, left wondering who or what inspires Kepel’s hopefulness both inside and outside France. By contrast, Roy concentrates on the sociological—as opposed to the better understood socio-economic—dislocation felt by these communities of relatively recent immigrants. Roy argues that the separation of Islam from the everyday in Western society—from social relations to dietary restrictions—forces Muslim minorities to actively define their faith and observance. Unhappily for the optimists, this conscious choice of faith could promote a neo-fundamentalist version of Islam as well as a liberal one.

Just as the authors’ conclusions diverge, so too do the styles of the two books. Kepel’s seems aimed at a mainstream audience—there are no references in the text—and is largely a narrative of current events and their intellectual and political genesis, albeit with a distinctive argument running throughout. Roy’s book, by contrast, reads like an extended analytical essay—the book oddly lacks a bibliography, although footnote references are quite extensive. As such, *Globalised Islam* will age better than *The War for Muslim Minds*, which, in 2005, is already beginning to date itself. For instance, while Kepel accurately describes the doom and gloom of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in mid-2004, we are left wondering if and/or how subsequent developments, such as the death of Yasser Arafat and the Israeli disengagement from Gaza, will affect the future course of Islamism. Drawing from Kepel’s analysis, we might conclude that the resolution of Middle Eastern crises currently connected with Islamism will push radical Islamists back down their previous trajectory of decline, denying them a pool of recruits and sympathisers. If, however, Roy is correct that Al Qaeda and their ‘subcontractors’ are of a different apolitical breed, preying on the dislocation of globalised Muslims (and others), then we must be prepared to weather the storm ahead.

¹ See Gilles Kepel, trans. Anthony F. Roberts, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, New ed., (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003); Olivier Roy, trans. Carol Volk, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1994).

² Gilles Kepel, trans. Pascale Ghazaleh, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), III.

³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴ Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (London: Hurst, 2004), II2-13.

⁵ See Roy, *Failure of Political Islam*.

⁶ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 43.

⁷ ‘Salaf’ refers to the ‘ancestors,’ or the Prophet and his companions. Salafists believe in returning to the ways of the ancestors, adhering to a strict fundamentalist version of Islam.

Anne Norton. Leo Strauss and the Politics of American Empire.

(New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005. 256 pp. £16.00 (hbk). ISBN 0300104367)

Reviewed by Paul Petzschamann (St Antony’s College, University of Oxford)

The idea that contemporary American politics is guided by a brand of neoconservatism informed by the political thought of German émigré philosopher Leo Strauss is not new. Anne Norton aims to specify the exact nature of that connection. In her view, we need to distinguish between academic adherents of Strauss and so-called ‘political Straussians.’ The latter—most prominently Paul Wolfowitz and Abram Shulsky—have reached positions in government while William Kristol and others became influential leaders of public (and published) opinion in the United States. Norton devotes the first part of her book to exploring her experiences with Straussians of both varieties during her student days at the University of Chicago. She makes the claim that the intellectual habits of the Straussian academic circle—the secrecy, the academic personality cult and the employment of scare tactics against rival intellectual factions—played an important role in the political socialisation of later neo-conservatives.

Later in the book, Norton also attempts to provide more concrete examples of how Straussian concepts were used to fashion a new political project. The idea of 'natural right' was employed to provide arguments against moral relativism and for an ethos of strong political leadership. Like Joseph de Maistre, Strauss had argued that the truth is potentially subversive and, therefore, dangerous. From this concept, political Straussians seem to derive the argument that political knowledge should be reserved to an enlightened elite lest it leads to the destruction of communal values. At the same time, Strauss' insight into the beneficial effects of intra-human struggle and the agonistic nature of politics was transformed into an argument for the creation of a global empire by means of military force. Norton provides an interesting account of how an old American conservatism was thus transformed into a radical and messianic ideology, combining military intervention and regime change abroad with an agenda of restoring traditional values.

What does all of this have to do with Leo Strauss? Norton revealingly points out that Strauss is similar to Hannah Arendt in distinguishing between political activity and the 'life of the mind.' Strauss himself, therefore, would have been very uncomfortable with the reasoning underlying neoconservative policies and would have probably rejected the 'Politics of American Empire.' Neither Strauss nor Machiavelli appears very convincing as intellectual father figures of Bush and Wolfowitz. This is not due to some form of intellectual incapacity on their part to digest this type of philosophising as is frequently suggested, but rather due to a fundamental ideological incompatibility between Strauss' traditional conservatism of prudence and the revolutionary impetus of American neoconservatism. As a sophisticated political theorist, Norton acknowledges this profound incompatibility. This acknowledgement, however, seems to belie the claim of a deeper connection between Strauss and the neoconservatism of 'American Empire' implied in the title.

The non-existence of this connection is, perhaps, the reason why the book says so little about Strauss' political thought itself. This leaves the reader somewhat disappointed. While providing insights into the academic cult and the production of the 'Strauss myth,' the book merely highlights the difficulty facing any attempt to derive a coherent political project from Strauss' wide-ranging philosophical oeuvre. The work, therefore, should be read in conjunction with Shadia B. Drury's *Leo Strauss and the American Right*,¹ which, while lacking the personal touch of Norton's insider account, provides more conceptual detail to satisfy the student of political ideas.

Notes

¹ Shadia B. Drury, *Leo Strauss and the American Right* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997).



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The International Politics Of Oil Call For Papers



St Antony's International Review

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